



Hom.

Hom. 742.

Ab. 849

Theol.

Homilet.

A
S E R M O N

Preached before The
UNIVERSITY of OXFORD

At
S T M A R Y's Church,
On SUNDAY, *May* 19, 1765 :

By
BENJAMIN KENNICOTT, D.D. F.R.S.
Fellow of EXETER College,
and One of HIS MAJESTY's Preachers
at WHITEHALL.

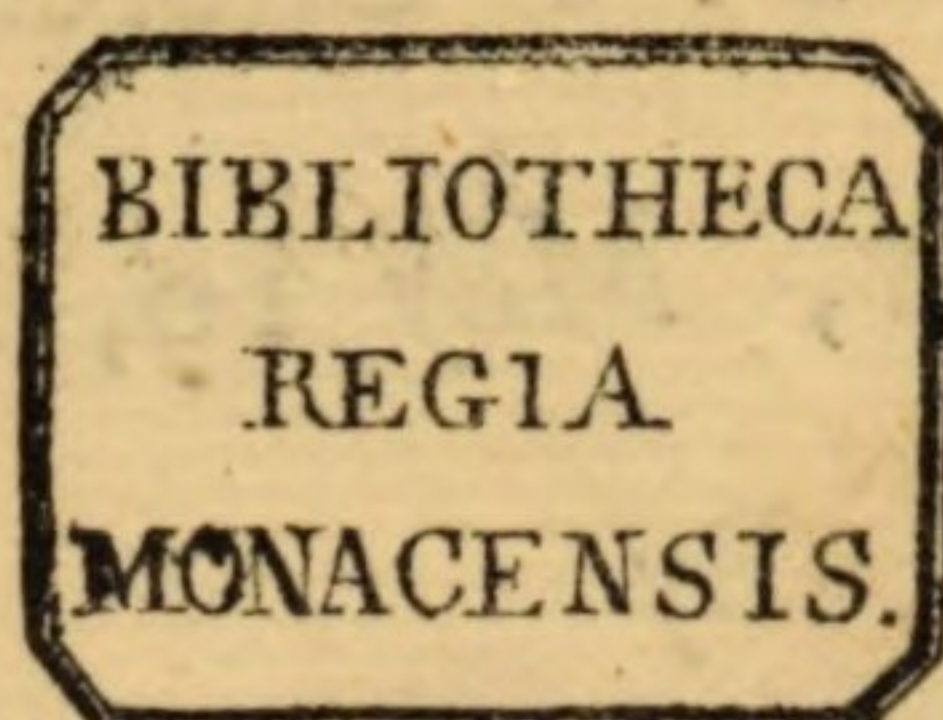
*Published at the Request of
Mr Vice-Chancellor and The Heads of Houses.*

With NOTES on the Sermon; on Psalms 48 and 89;
and on some late Reflections of the Ld Bp of Gloucester.

O X F O R D

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M DCC LX V.



TO
THE REVEREND AND WORTHY
THE VICE-CHANCELLOR
AND THE HEADS OF HOUSES
IN
OXFORD.

GENTLEMEN,

THE Favours, which I have had the Honour to receive from our Illustrious UNIVERSITY, particularly that of patronizing my Collation of the Hebrew Manuscripts of the Old Testament, lay me under the greatest Obligations. And, as such Favours demand my best endeavours to answer your public-spirited Intentions; so shall I rejoice in all opportunities of expressing my Respect and Gratitude.

[IV]

The following Sermon, which You have been pleased to distinguish by your Approbation, appears before the World in ready compliance with your Request. And it seems proper, that something be prefixed to this Sermon, concerning the Occasion of it: especially, as I think myself particularly accountable for the employment of that Time, which my Patrons have purchased by a Subscription so ample, as hath not till now been known in favour of any Literary Undertaking.

My attendance in HIS MAJESTY'S Chapel at Whitehall, last *Christmas*-day, made it necessary for me to prepare a Sermon relative to *the BIRTH of CHRIST*. And I thought, I could not discharge my duty, before so respectable an Audience, with more propriety, than by endeavouring to explain the very celebrated Prophecy of ISAIAH, *Behold! a Virgin shall*
conceive

conceive and bear a Son; and to vindicate ST MATTHEW's Application of these words to the *Virgin* MARY, and her *Son* JESUS CHRIST.

Many and excellent are the Defences of our holy Religion, which have been published in our own Country, and in the present Century. But, if Christianity has been defended less ably, on any one general point, than on others; that point is *The Quotations in the New Testament from the Old*: several of which do not now express that correspondence and harmony, which men naturally expect to find in all such parts of the *Second* sacred Volume, as are quoted from the *First*.

If, as we firmly believe, Both these Volumes of Scripture were *given by inspiration of God*; doubtless they originally agreed together. And where ever, at this distance of time, they materially differ; in every such place,
it

it becomes necessary to enquire —
 Whether we have now *the true Readings* of the two Originals; and if so,
 Whether *the true Sense* of those Originals be expressed in our present Translations of them.

In order to ascertain the true Readings of the *Greek* Testament; the proper, and indeed necessary method has been (in part) taken, by collating many ancient and valuable MSS, and publishing their Various Readings. Till the same method shall be taken with the MSS of the *Hebrew* Testament, and *their* numerous Various Readings (which are now collecting) shall be published likewise; there must be less certainty, as to the genuine words of the *Old* Testament than those of the *New*. And farther: it is probable, that our Translators may have failed in expressing the Sense of the *Hebrew* Testament, rather than that of the *Greek*; because

[VII]

because the former language was less understood than the latter, in the beginning of the last Century.

As to the passage in *Isaiab*, which is the subject of the following Sermon, and which has occasioned such remarkable perplexity in our many Writers, who have commented upon it; some of its chief difficulties seem to have arisen, not from any Corruption in the printed Hebrew Text, but from the present English Translation of it. The case, in general, has been: that such of our Authors, as have understood Hebrew, have missed the true meaning and principal use of this passage, by considering it as *one single Prophecy doubly fulfilled*; whilst those, who have supposed it to contain *two distinct Prophecies*, have not properly supported their explanations for want of skill in Hebrew literature.

Tho'

[VIII]

Tho' many considerable Variations have been already found in the Hebrew MSS, in other sacred passages; and several of consequence will be mentioned in the Notes here subjoined (which Variations will be a fresh specimen, in favour of my Work) no use is made of those MSS, in the Sermon itself: and indeed the Hebrew Text, as printed, seems to contain the true Reading in this important passage. If therefore we have here the Prophet's *genuine Words*; it should be our careful study to discover, and ascertain, the Prophet's *genuine Sense*.

This, Gentlemen, has been here attempted; with what success, is submitted to the judgment of the Learned, and particularly to your own deliberate determination. For You Yourself may now attend to various particulars here subjoined; some of which are useful, others necessary, to the illustration

[IX]

illustration of this subject. These particulars however could not, for different reasons, make part of the Sermon; tho' it was, when preached before You, enlarged by several remarks, which would have been less proper before a *popular* Congregation.

Permit me to observe, that the ablest Writers upon this subject, certainly the greater part of them, have been examined; their sentiments, where they seemed just, are here adopted; particulars, where wrong, are differently stated; our Translation of this passage, where improper, is corrected; and some proofs, which were greatly wanted, are here supplied. And yet, as the subject is difficult; demonstration, or absolute certainty, is by no means pretended.

If therefore any learned Reader should think the following account wrong, and will oblige the Public with a better; I shall be thankful for it. *Your* chief

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aim,

aim, Gentlemen, as well as *mine*, will be equally answered; whether the explanation here given be just and satisfactory, or whether it shall be the occasion of another truly deserving that character. But whatever be the event, in that respect; the present publication will, I hope, be admitted as one proof of my endeavours to promote the Honour of THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, and also of that sincere Gratitude, with which

I am,

GENTLEMEN,

Your highly obliged

and very obedient

humble Servant,

B. KENNICOTT.

and I am sure, will
be equally answered, whether the ex-
planation be given by the first or
second, or whether it shall be the ex-
planation of another, truly, believing that
it is better. But whatever be the result,
in that respect, the present publication
will, I hope, be admitted as one proof
of my endeavours to promote the Ho-
nour of the Holy Scriptures,
and also of that sacred, Christian, and
which

I am, Sir,
Your humble servant,
GENTLEMAN,

Your obedient servant,

and very obedient

and humble servant,

the Lord, your most obedient

and humble servant,

ISAIAH

CHAPTER VII;

VERSES 13, 14, 15, 16.

And he said: Hear ye now, O house of David; is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my GOD also?

Therefore the LORD himself shall give you a sign; behold! a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name IMMANUEL.

Butter and honey shall he eat; that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good,

For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good; the land, that thou abhorrest, shall be forsaken of both her kings,

RELIGION is absolutely necessary to the present, and future, Happiness of Men. And CHRISTIANITY claims to be that particular Religion; which, upon the authority of GOD, ought to be embraced by all Mankind. Every man therefore, to whom the GOSPEL of CHRIST is made known, should carefully consider its nature and pretensions; and make it the great rule of his life, when he is rationally convinced of its being true.

Now, amongst the several kinds of evidence, by which the truth of Christianity is proved, the principal are these three that follow: the *Prophecies* fulfilled, concerning the Author of it; the *Miracles* performed by those, who first preached it; and the *Excellence* of the Religion itself. And these three kinds of evidence, attentively considered, seem sufficient to convince any reasonable man, that *Christianity* is by no means a *cunningly-devised fable*, but that JESUS CHRIST is the true Messiah and Saviour of the World.

For, as to the *Prophecies*: were they not many and various in their circumstances; delivered, through the space of near four thousand

land years, with greater and greater clearness ; all fulfilled in CHRIST, [*Note 1*] and in Him only ; consequently proving, that *this is of a truth that prophet, that should come into the world ?* [2] As to his *Miracles* : were they not public, beneficent, numerous and astonishing ; such as *no man could work, except GOD were with him ?* And, as to his *Religion* : does not the reasonableness of its genuine Doctrines, and the purity of its Precepts, with the tendency of every part to make men Holy and Happy, clearly manifest it to be *worthy of GOD, and worthy of all acceptation ?*

But, it must be confessed : whilst the evidence, from the *Excellence* of this Religion, is so conclusive ; and whilst the evidence from *Miracles*, especially that of the Resurrection of CHRIST, carries with it such forcible conviction ; the *Prophecies*, which, from their very nature and the times of their delivery, are necessarily attended with some obscurity — these have been the occasion of so much controversy, some of them have been so often charged by Unbelievers with absurdity, and others have appeared so dark and unsatisfactory to many Christians themselves ; that such Prophecies as were fulfilled in the time of

CHRIST

CHRIST are not now attended with all that power of persuasion, which they seem to have carried with them in the early days of Christianity. [3]

To whatever causes this effect is owing, and some causes might be specified ; [4] it is certainly the duty of the Ministers of the Gospel to enquire and search diligently into the true meaning of these sacred *Oracles* ; giving the most earnest heed to those in particular, which are set forth by the Apostles as of principal importance ; and the quotations of which, made from the *Old Testament*, may affect the authority of the Writers of the *New*.

Amongst all these Prophecies, that of a *Virgin's conceiving and bearing a Son &c.* which is the Prophecy first quoted in the very first Evangelist, has been (as to the Christian application of it) treated with peculiar insult ; and this, not less by *Jews*, who allow the authority of the *Old Testament*, than by *Deists*, who deny the authority of all Revelation. [5] And it has also in this case happened, that, whilst *Wisdom* has been insulted by her Enemies, she has not been fully *justified* by her Friends ; since there has not, perhaps, been given of the text any explanation, which

which is sufficiently exact and properly supported.

It cannot therefore be improper to attempt a more just and satisfactory account of this celebrated part of holy Scripture. Especially, as the importance of it is so great, in the opinions of Enemies as well as Friends, that some late attempts to prove *the spuriousness of the two first chapters of St Matthew's Gospel* have been ascribed chiefly to the Evangelical application of this very Prophecy. [6]

The words of the text are these.

And he said : Hear ye now, O house of David ; is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my GOD also ?

Therefore the LORD himself shall give you a sign ; behold ! a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name IMMANUEL.

Butter and honey shall he eat ; that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.

For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good ; the land, that thou abhorrest, shall be forsaken of both her kings.

Concerning these words there have been the four following opinions.

I : That

I: That the whole passage relates only to *a Son of Isaiah*.

II: That the whole passage relates only to **C H R I S T**.

III: That the whole passage relates both to *Isaiah's Son* and to **C H R I S T**; to the former in a primary and literal sense, and in a secondary sense to the latter.

IV: That here are *Two Prophecies*; each literal, and each to be understood in one sense only: the first relating to **C H R I S T**, the second to *Isaiah's Son*.

The **F I R S T** of these opinions is strenuously contended for by *Jews* [7] and *Deists*; who, by confining this passage wholly to *Isaiah's Son*, have attempted to derogate from the authority of St Matthew, who applies it as a Prophecy to **C H R I S T**. But the word, here translated *Virgin*, signifies, in every other part of the Old Testament, *a Woman who hath not known Man*. And the consequence from hence is, that the words *a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son*, cannot be applied properly to *Isaiah's wife*. As it is here affirmed, that the original word signifies *a Virgin*, in every other text; it should be just observed, that the text in the book of *Proverbs*, which

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has

has been often brought to prove the contrary, is not here forgotten: and even *that* text might (if the nature of this Discourse would permit) be explained fairly and to satisfaction, in a manner perfectly consistent with the preceding assertion. [8]

If it should be objected, that the original words are *not future*, and therefore are not likely to point out an event so very distant as *the Birth of CHRIST*; it may be answered, that the words, strictly translated, are, *Behold! a virgin is conceiving and bearing a son &c.* This mode of speech is the animated but customary style of prophetic rapture; which, in order to express the greatest certainty, describes future events as *past*, or paints future scenes as *present* to the eye. Thus the same prophet, in his next magnificent prediction of the Messiah's Birth, exultingly cries out, *Unto us a child IS BORN, unto us a son IS GIVEN*: and afterwards, in his pathetic description of the Messiah's Sufferings, *He is despised and rejected of men — Surely he HATH BORN our griefs &c.* But, tho' no argument can be drawn, against the Christian sense of these prophetic words, from their expressing the then *present* time; yet an argument of great weight may, and must be, formed upon
this

this very circumstance, in proof of what is here contended for. And certainly, if the words mean *a virgin is conceiving*, a woman conceiving and yet a virgin; this wonderful circumstance was true, as to *the Virgin Mary*; but it was true, as to no other woman. [9]

To these remarks upon the Original language must be added one, arising from *the Circumstances of the Text*; for we may learn from thence likewise, that *Isaiah's wife and the birth of a child in the common way* cannot have been here intended. And an appeal may safely be made to persons of sense, tho' wholly unacquainted with the Hebrew language, whether it be at all probable — that the Prophet should address himself to *the House of David* so solemnly, on so interesting an occasion; should awaken their attention; should raise their wonder; should promise them, in the name of GOD, *a sign* or miracle; should mention the future son, not of *a Man* (as usual) but of *a Woman*, and call that woman *a Virgin*; and should foretell the Birth of IMMANUEL i. e. GOD WITH US: and yet, that no more was meant by all this, than that *a son should be born of a young married woman*; which is evidently no wonder, no miracle, at all. [10] If

If then, from the constant signification of the noun for *Virgin*, from the expression of the words in the *present* tense, and from the nature of the context, *a Son of Isaiah by his Wife* cannot have been here meant; and if the first opinion be consequently proved indefensible: we may now proceed to consider the SECOND; which is, that the whole passage of the text relates only to CHRIST.

But, these words cannot wholly be applied to an event, distant by more than seven hundred Years; because the concluding clause speaks of a Child, either *then born*, or *to be born soon*: and before the Child, *so spoken of*, should be old enough to distinguish natural good from evil; the two Kings, then advancing against Jerusalem, were to be themselves destroyed. [11]

The THIRD is the opinion of those, who contend for a *double* completion of some Prophecies; and insist, that this *whole* Passage relates both *to Isaiah's Son* and *to CHRIST*; to the former in a primary and literal sense, and in a secondary sense to the latter. But, not to enter into that extensive question, whether, tho' *some* Prophecies relate *solely* to the Messiah,

Messiah, others may, or may not, be *doubly* fulfilled; I shall only observe, that no such double completion can possibly take place here.

Wherever a *secondary* sense is insisted on; there we must have a *primary* sense also, which is at least *true*. But the present case renders that impossible. Because, if the principal noun does every where else signify a *Virgin*; and if it be here meant of *the Virgin Mary*, and was afterwards properly applied to HER: it cannot with truth and propriety be applied to *the Wife of Isaiah*. And farther; if it were possible for *every other* Prophecy to admit a double completion, yet will not *this*. Because a Child's being conceived and born of a Virgin happened in the world only *once*; and therefore, as this Prophecy derives its force from its specifying a case *singular* and *without example*, it can be fulfilled in *one* sense only.

There remains then the FOURTH opinion, which is — that the text contains *two* distinct Prophecies; each literal, and each to be understood in one sense only; the first relating to CHRIST, the second to *Isaiah's Son*. This, which is the opinion of some eminent

eminent Defenders of Christianity, will (I presume) appear true and satisfactory ; when the end of the first Prophecy, and the beginning of the second, shall have been properly stated ; and when some proofs, which seem absolutely necessary, but perhaps were never yet produced, shall have been added to former observations.

The genuine sense of this passage depending greatly on the circumstances of those, to whom it was delivered ; it is here necessary to state the history.

Ahaz became king of Judah, when the people were greatly corrupted ; and he himself was strongly inclined to idolatry. [12] To correct therefore both King and People, GOD permitted a powerful Confederacy to take place, between *Rezin* king of Syria and *Pe-
kah* king of Israel : who, growing jealous of their formidable [13] neighbour, invaded Judea, in the first year of Ahaz ; [14] and so successfully, that above one hundred thousand of the men of Ahaz were slain in one day ; and above two hundred thousand of his people were carried captives into the land of Israel. [15]

Flushed with these successes, the two kings thought that Jerusalem itself would now become

come an easy prey to their power: and, in the second year of Ahaz [16] marched towards it, with a resolution totally to abolish the *Royal Succession*, which had been for twelve generations in the House of David; and to establish, in the holy city, an heathen king, a Syrian, *the son of Tabeal*. [17]

At the approach of these Confederates, *the heart of Ahaz was moved, and the hearts of all his people, as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind*. The consternation was universal; and no wonder. For the young King, and the corrupt part of his People, would easily be led, from the sufferings they had felt, to fear greater. And the religious part of the Nation would entertain fears still more alarming, fears of *the extinction of the House of David*: for, were That House to fail, then farewell to all their glorious hopes of A MESSIAH, *a Son of David*, who was to *reign for ever*. [18] These men therefore, no doubt, *cried unto the LORD in their distress*; [19] and expostulated with him, concerning *the sure mercies of David* — LORD, *where are thy old loving kindnesses, which thou swarest unto David in thy truth?* [20]

Amidst these distresses, we find Ahaz at the end of the conduit of the upper pool; probably

bably surveying that chief source of their water, and contriving how to secure that water to the city, and defend it against the enemy. At this place, constantly frequented by the people, and then visited by the King, attended probably by the Chiefs of his Family; Isaiah is commanded to meet him (taking with him his son *Shear-jashub*) and to declare in the name of JEHOVAH, that *the evil counsel against Jerusalem should not come to pass.*

The counsel of these Kings was *evil*; because, in opposition to GOD's appointment of *the Royal House of David*, and ~~of~~ his promises thereto, particularly of *Messiah the Prince* to spring from thence, their compact was — probably, like Eastern Conquerors, to destroy the House of David [21] — certainly, to remove the House of David from the Throne; and to fix, in the holy city, an heathen King. But, why would *the heathen rage, and imagine such a vain thing!* Why would *the kings of the earth stand up; and the rulers take counsel together against the LORD, and against his Anointed, against his CHRIST!* No wonder; if they, who *imagined such a device, were not able to perform it.*

The prophet, having declared to Ahaz that the scheme of the Confederates should be frustrated,

frustrated, bids him, at the command of GOD, *ask* some *sign* or miracle, either in Heaven or on Earth. But *Abaz* said; *I will not ask, neither will I tempt* JEHOVAH.

The King's disobedience, however coloured over with a specious piety in his allusion to a text of Scripture, appears from the next words of the prophet to have been highly censurable. And it probably proceeded from his distrust, either of the power, or the favour of JEHOVAH; after Judea had suffered so much from these same enemies, who worshipped other Gods. [22] And it is observable, that, tho' the prophet says, *Ask a sign from* JEHOVAH *thy* GOD, the king replies *I will not tempt* JEHOVAH; not adding *my* GOD, nor choosing to acknowledge Him in that character.

Thus repulsed by the King, the prophet addresses himself at large to *the House of David*; [23] and probably there were then present other persons of the Royal Family, and some also of the people who were of *the House of David*: that House! to whom the great promise had been made of *a Son of David*, who was to *reign for ever*. *Hear ye now, O house of David: is it a small thing for you* [24] *to weary men, but will ye weary my* GOD *also? Therefore the* LORD *himself* &c.

The word, rendered *therefore*, may (upon good authority) be translated *nevertheless*; [25] a sense very applicable to this place — A sign, or miracle, hath been now offered at the command of G O D, but is refused; and can *you* think it of little moment to treat with such contempt both *the Prophet* and *his G O D*? NEVERTHELESS *the LORD himself will give to YOU the sign following: Behold! a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and call* [26] *his name IMMANUEL.* [27] *Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil and choose the good.*

Here, I presume, ends this first prophecy; [28] and the meaning may be stated thus. Fear not, *O House of David*, the fate threatened you: G O D is mindful of his promise to your Father, and will fulfil the same in a very wonderful manner: *Behold! a virgin* (rather THE *virgin* [29] the only one thus circumstanced) *shall conceive, and bear a son*; which son shall therefore be, what no other has been or shall be, *the seed of the woman*, here stiled THE VIRGIN: and this son *shall be called* (i. e. in Scripture language *he shall be*) IMMANUEL, *God with us*: but this great Person, this G O D visible amongst Men, introduced into the world thus, in a manner that

is

is without example, shall yet be truly *Man*: he shall be born an *Infant*, and as an *Infant* shall he be brought up: for *butter and honey* (rather *milk and honey*) *shall he eat*; he shall be fed with the common Food of Infants, which in the East was [30] Milk mixed with Honey, *till he shall know* (not, *that he may know*, as if such food was to be the cause of such knowledge, but) *till* [31] he shall grow up to *know* how to *refuse the evil and choose the good*. [32]

Here then we find a comprehensive description of the Messiah; *of the Word, who was made Flesh, and dwelt among us*. His *Divinity* is marked by his being GOD; his *Residence upon earth*, by his being GOD WITH US; and his *Humanity*, by his being *born of a Woman*, and *fed with the usual Food of Infants* during his infant state. How perfect is the harmony between the parts of this description, and the marks of the true Messiah in other sacred passages; and also, between *the first Prophecy* in the very beginning of the Old Testament, and *the completion of it* first mentioned in the very beginning of the *New*!

For, the first promise of a Messiah was, that he should be (not *the seed of Adam*, as he would have been called, if to descend from

an human *father*, but) *the seed of the Woman*, because he was to be born of a *Virgin*. Therefore the Apostle says; *when the fulness of time came, GOD sent forth his son, made of a Woman*. And that it was GOD, not Man, who was to *prepare a Body* for the Messiah, appears from the 40th *Psalms*, according to the Apostle's very remarkable quotation of it: where the Messiah is prophetically represented as saying unto GOD — *A body didst thou prepare for me; then said I, Lo! I come: as in the volume of the book is written concerning me.* [33]

Having thus endeavoured to illustrate the *first Prophecy*, contained in the text, and to defend the Application of it to *the Virgin Mary's Conception and the Birth of JESUS CHRIST*; I shall now briefly state the *second Prophecy*, which is thus expressed in our present translation — *For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good; the land, that thou abhorrest, shall be forsaken of both her kings.*

Now, that this verse contains a distinct Prophecy, may be proved thus.

I: The words *preceding* have been proved to be confined to *the Messiah*, whose birth
was

was then distant above seven hundred years; whereas the words *here* are confined to some Child, who was not to arrive at years of discretion, *before* the two Kings, then advancing against Jerusalem, should be themselves cut off.

2dly: Some end was undoubtedly to be answered by the presence of *Isaiab's Son*; whom G O D commanded the prophet to take with him, on this visit to Ahaz: and yet, no use at all appears to have been made of this Son, unless *He* be referred to in *this* sentence.

And lastly: These Prophecies are manifestly distinguished by being addressed to different persons: the first being *plural*, and addressed to *the House of David*; but the second is *singular*, and therefore is addressed to *Ahaz*. [34]

We see then, that the prophet addressed himself at large to *the House of David*, when he foretold the birth of *the Messiah*; which, tho' the event might be very distant, would give present consolation, as it assured them of *the preservation* of the House of David; but that he addressed himself in particular to *the King*, when he foretold *the speedy destruction of the two Kings his enemies*.

This

This transition will be more evident, if we render the first word *But*; as the same word is rendered just before, in this same passage. [35] The word also, now rendered *the child*, should be here rendered *THIS child*: and the sense of the verse may be then clearly ascertained. The necessity of this last rendering has been observed by more than one expofitor; but perhaps no one has quoted any parallel instance, or produced proper authority for this necessary change of our translation.

But, that we may not be charged with offering violence to an expression, in order to defend the Evangelists, or to confute their Adversaries; some authority should be produced, in a point on which so much depends: and I shall mention several passages similar to the case before us. When Jacob blessed Joseph's two sons; he laid his hands upon their heads, and used *the very same word* in the plural number, which Isaiah here uses in the singular. And as that word is rendered *THESE children*, by the authors of the *Greek* and other very ancient Versions; [36] we have their joint authorities for rendering the word here *this child*.

The authors of *our own* translation have not indeed rendered the word in the text *this child*:

child: but they have shewn, that it *may* be so rendered: because they have themselves, in several other places, expressed the emphatic article by *this* and *that* in the singular number, and by *these* in the plural. Thus, in *Jeremiah* 23, 21 — *I have not sent* THESE *prophets*: in *Numbers* xi, 6 — *there is nothing before our eyes, but* THIS *manna*: in *1 Samuel* 29, 4 — *make* THIS *fellow return*: and to omit other instances, [37] we read in *Jeremiah* 28, 16 (what it is impossible to translate otherwise) THIS *year thou shalt die*.

But, besides these instances, in which similar words *may* and *must* be so rendered, agreeably to our *present* translation; in this same verse of *Isaiah*, there is the authority of our *old English* translation for both the alterations here proposed: for the very first printed edition, and (at least) two others, render these words — BUT *or ever* THAT *child* &c. [38] And, to obviate any prejudice against the other alterations before proposed, it should be observed, that (so far from being now first thought of, to favour any new opinions) almost all of them are the very readings in our *former English Bibles*; from which our *present* has been varied, in this and other instances, very improperly.

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The translation of the principal word here by *this child* being thus vindicated; it may perhaps be asked, who this child was: and the answer is — a son of Ifaiah, called *Shear-jashub*; whom God had commanded the Prophet to take with him, upon this occasion; but of whom no use was made, unless in the application of these words; whom Ifaiah might now hold in his arm; and to whom therefore he might point with his hand [39] when he addressed himself to Ahaz, and said, BUT *before THIS child shall grow up to discern good from evil; the land, that thou abhorrest, shall be forsaken of both her kings.*

The child's name is evidently prophetic; for it signifies *a remnant, or the remainder, shall return.* And probably he was so called, because born the year before, when such multitudes were carried captives into the land of Israel: and this, by way of prediction to the Jews — that, tho' they had lost one hundred thousand men by the sword in one day, and double that number by captivity; yet *those, who remained alive, the remnant,* certainly should *return* to their own country.

This Prophecy was soon after fulfilled. And therefore this son, whose name had been so consolatory the year before, was with the utmost

most propriety brought forth now, and made the subject of a second Prophecy — namely, that before *that child*, then in the second year of his age, should be able to distinguish natural good from evil, before he should be about four or five years old; *the lands of Syria and Israel*, spoken of here as *one kingdom* on account of their present *union and confederacy*, should be *forsaken of both their kings*: [40] which, tho' at that time highly improbable, came to pass about two years after; when those two Kings, who had in vain attempted to conquer Jerusalem, were themselves destroyed, each in his own country.

There are yet two circumstances, which must be considered; because they have been frequently ridiculed by Unbelievers. And first, say these men of reason — *If the miraculous birth of CHRIST were true; yet how could an event so very distant be properly A SIGN, at the time when the prophecy was delivered.* But — *If a thing future could be a sign; yet is this fact itself (the birth of a child from a Virgin) of such a nature, as not to admit of proof, and therefore can be no proof of any thing else.*

E

As

As to the first objection; the original word for a *sign* means also a *miracle*. And as GOD had offered *Abaz* a miracle, to be *then* performed, which had been refused; GOD himself promises to *the House of David* a miracle, which should be performed, not then, but *afterwards*. But the word signifies, not only something *done at present*, to induce a belief of something future; but also, something *to be done afterwards*, declared before-hand in confirmation of something foretold.

Thus: when GOD commanded Moses to go from the wilderness into Egypt, to demand the dismissal of his brethren; GOD assures him of success, and tells him — *this shall be A SIGN unto thee; when thou hast brought forth the people, ye shall serve GOD upon this mountain*. And thus: when the Assyrians were marching against Jerusalem, in the reign of Hezekiah; Isaiah is again commanded to declare, that the city shall not be taken; and after saying, *this shall be A SIGN unto you*, he specifies several circumstances which were all future.

If then a thing, at all future, may be declared as a *sign*; [41] it makes no difference, whether the thing be future by *three* years or by *three hundred*: provided, that one circumstance

stance be observed — which is, that *the Man*, or *Body of Men*, to whom the fact is declared to be a sign, shall exist and see the thing accomplished. This was manifestly the case here. For not only *Abaz*, to whom the second Prophecy was delivered, saw that fulfilled as to *the two Kings his enemies*; but also *the House of David*, to whom the first Prophecy was addressed, saw that fulfilled in JESUS CHRIST. [42]

The last objection is — that *the birth of a child from a Virgin is a fact of such a nature, as not to admit of proof; and therefore such a fact cannot itself be a proper proof in favour of JESUS CHRIST*. The answer is — that this Prophecy is quoted by the Evangelist, not as proving JESUS to be the Messiah; but as proving, that *one eminent part of the Messiah's character was fulfilled in JESUS*. For tho' an assertion, that *he was so born*, would not prove him the Messiah; yet he could not be the Messiah, if he was *not so born*. [43]

The evidence of Prophecies arises from the accomplishment of them *all*, of which this was one, in *the Person of CHRIST*. But that, which was first in time, was necessarily last in proof. And this fact of his extraordinary

Birth, being first in his Life, came to be first mentioned in the order of history. But the proof of its being true arises from hence — that it is expressly asserted by *two of CHRIST's Disciples*, after they had been inspired with the knowledge of *this* and other truths relating to Him; and were enabled to prove what they themselves *said* by what they themselves *did*. And therefore this *invisible fact*, being thus asserted by men, who proved by *visible Miracles* the truth of what they affirmed, is proved to be true likewise.

IF then this wonderful and singular circumstance, *the Birth of the Messiah from the Virgin* — thus implied in the first promise of a Redeemer, soon after the Creation — thus revealed more and more clearly by the Prophets, particularly by the Evangelical Prophet *Isaiah*, above seven hundred years before it came to pass — actually was at last accomplished in THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST: what a magnificent, what an awful scene, does this unfold to mankind!

For, not only to *the House of David*, but to *the whole World*, unto *Us* hath *this Sign* been given, and *this Miracle* been granted. And from this illustrious fact we may learn
—— that

—— that *the whole Plan of our Redemption* has been conducted, from the first, in *one uniform manner* —— that Religion has ever subsisted on the principle of *Faith*, as well as of Obedience; Faith in GOD's promises, particularly that of *a Redeemer*, formerly believed in as *promised*, now believed in as *come* —— that *known unto GOD are all things from everlasting to everlasting*; and *unto GOD all things are possible* —— and that, by gradually revealing the character of the Saviour of the World, in a series of Prophecies from the very beginning, THE SOVEREIGN OF THE UNIVERSE has manifested HIS unceasing attention to this grand Event.

And, if so: *how shall Men escape*, how shall WE OURSELVES ESCAPE; IF WE NEGLECT SO GREAT SALVATION!

But: that a *Salvation*, so great, can possibly be *neglected* —— that a Revelation, so important, so evidently calculated to improve and exalt the Understanding, as well as to warm and regulate the Affections, so manifestly tending to make us happy here and to all eternity, can possibly have *Enemies* —— that there should be men, that there should be many, who pretend to have considered the whole

whole Plan of our Redemption, with every circumstance of splendor, which has attended the morning and the noon-day of *the Sun of Righteousness*; who yet can reject THE GOSPEL, disbelieving all the evidences of its Divinity — this, this calls for the most serious attention of those, who *are set for the defence of the Gospel*; from whom therefore is expected, and very reasonably expected, every possible endeavour to *ascertain, to illustrate, and to enforce* the sacred Oracles, entrusted to their care: especially as knowing, that they cannot *work out* their own *Salvation*, without being zealous for the Salvation of *other* men.

To conclude.

Amidst the present increase of Infidelity, very alarming should be the words of GOD, by his Prophet, contained in this chapter; as being too applicable to the People of this land: IF YE WILL NOT BELIEVE, SURELY YE SHALL NOT BE ESTABLISHED.

Let every strong reason therefore be produced, let every fair method therefore be tried, to state the Proofs of Christianity in such a manner, as to do full justice to each kind of evidence in its favour. And this;
not

not only for the more effectual conviction of those, who *doubt*, or *disbelieve*; but also for the stronger confirmation of *our own* Faith, and the more powerful influence of that Faith upon *our own* Practice. For; as nothing can be more *astonishing* than the *Unbelief*, and yet the *Zeal*, of the ENEMIES of Christianity; except it be — the *Belief*, and yet the *Coldness*, of its FRIENDS: so nothing can be more *criminal* than THEIR denying the truth of the Gospel; except it be — OUR *holding* that *truth in unrighteousness*.

THE END OF THE

S E R M O N.

N O T E S.

1. THIS expression means *all such* Prophecies, concerning the Messiah, as were intended to be fulfilled between the time of his Conception and Birth, and the time of his Ascension: but not such, as relate to any times which were then, and may be still, future.

2. It is not here meant, that the Prophecies, exclusive of Miracles, would have proved JESUS to be the Messiah; because it was prophesied of the Messiah, that He should work Miracles. In general, this just distinction is to be observed; that the Miracles, which CHRIST performed, proved Him to be *sent from* GOD; and the Prophecies, which He fulfilled, proved Him to be *the promised Messiah*.

3. A restriction here is necessary; and only those Prophecies are meant, which were fulfilled *in or soon after* the time of CHRIST. Because, in general, the evidence from Prophecy is so far from being now weaker than formerly, that it is certainly grown stronger from the accomplishment of many Prophecies in *later* times; and it is, and will be, continually deriving more strength, from the accomplishment of *other* Prophecies.

4. The causes here meant are — *Some Corruptions* in the printed Hebrew Text; and *many Inaccuracies* in our present English Translation.

5. As to the *Deists*; see particularly Mr Collins on *Literal Prophecy*: and as to the *Jews*; see particularly the MS of *Jacob Aben Amram*, preserved in Balliol College Library; which MS Bp Kidder thought *the greatest effort ever made, or like to be made against Christianity*: Pref. to Part 3, *Demonst. Messias*. But the Jews, in general, have so remarkably agreed in opposing the Christian interpretation of this Prophecy; and so many of them antiently attacked the chaste character of the Virgin Mother, whose wonderful *conceiving and bearing a son* is here declared to be a *Sign*; that it is submitted to the Learned, whether these are not the true circumstances to illustrate the obscure words of *Simeon*, addressed to the Virgin Herself, in *Luk. 2; 34, 35* — *And he said unto Mary his Mother: behold! this (child) is set for the fall, and rising again, of many in Israel; and for a sign, which shall be spoken against: yea, a sword shall pierce thro' thine own soul also; that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.*

F

Here

Here it seems probable, that the *first* part alludes to *Isai.* 8; 14, 15: as if Simeon had said; *behold, this is he, who was to be for a sanctuary, but for a stone of stumbling, at which many were to fall &c.* — that the *second* part relates to this express passage of the Text, to this same σημεῖον, to this Sign given to the House of David, to *this very Child* being conceived and born of *the Virgin* — and that the *third* part means the sword of *calumny*, the false but still afflicting aspersions cast upon the Virgin's own character; probably by some unbelieving Jews, during her life time, at least after the publication of St Matthew's Gospel; certainly since her death in a manner very extraordinary: and such a Sign, to be so *spoken against*, might well be foretold. And thus, by the different speeches made, and the different writings published, concerning the Messiah and his Mother, some favourable, others unfavourable, THE REASONINGS of many men's hearts, whether candid and honest, or dishonest and unfair, would clearly be made manifest. See Origen against Celsus; book 1. *Toledoth Jesu*, in *Wagenseil's Tel. Ign. Satan*: with the *Confutation*, at pag. 14, 15: and *Huldrich's Historia Jeschuæ Nazareni*, pag. 4 &c. See also the late *Diction. Philosoph.* c. 9.

6. Of the strength and pertinency of this prediction none seem more sensible than our adversaries themselves. And I think they virtually confess as much by the strenuous endeavours of late used by them to prove the spuriousness of the two first chapters in the present Gospel of St Matthew. And their chief spite is at the former of these two, because therein is applied the formidable prophecy of the text, and the history of Mary's Virgin Pregnancy is there set down. Twells's Serm. B. L. vol. 2, pag. 22.

7. Formerly some Jews applied this passage to *Hezekiah*. Thus Trypho tells Justin (p. 280) ἐστὶ δὲ ἡ παλαιὰ προφητεία λεγόμενη εἰς Εἰzekiαν. But as the original words signify SHALL GIVE you a sign: and as verses 14 and 15 evidently relate to a child not then born, speaking of him (as Trypho himself calls it) by way of Prophecy: it is impossible, that the child here meant could be Hezekiah. For, when he became King (on the death of Ahaz his father) he was 25 years old; and therefore, as the father reigned but 16 years, the son must have been about 10 years old (in the 2d year of Ahaz) when this Prophecy was delivered.

8. The place, which the Jews chiefly fix upon, to prove the contrary, is *Prov.* 30; 18, 19: *There be three things, too wonderful*

derful for me; yea four, which I know not; the way of an eagle, in the air; the way of a serpent, upon a rock; the way of a ship, in the midst of the sea; and the way of a man (בעלמה in virgin) WITH A MAID.

To the objection, founded upon the word בעלמה at the end of this passage, this answer might be given, in general — that it is against all rules of criticism to allow, that a sense must be given to any word, different from what it radically and plainly signifies in all other places; merely, because it is supposed to signify otherwise in one place, which is very obscure.

But the matter need not be rested upon this general reply, however just and proper; because a particular answer may be given, two ways i.e. upon these two different suppositions — either, that the printed Hebrew Text is here entirely right — or, that one letter in one word is now wrong.

Upon the first supposition, the matter may be stated thus. The three things, which Agur wonders at, are — how an eagle flies, a serpent creeps, and a ship swims; how these three things could be performed: to which he adds a fourth thing, which he does not understand, and is unacquainted with — the way of a man בעלמה with respect to, and on account of, a virgin. [That ב signifies proper, see *Jonah* 1, 14; and *Nold.* 23.] He does not seem to speak here — either of that knowledge of women; which is so common, as not to be at all wonderful — or of any formation in the womb; which is wonderful, but not expressed in these words — or of the man CHRIST, and his virgin Mother; which the words do not sufficiently support — or lastly, of the Violation of a Virgin as uninvestigable.* But, what Agur

* Upon this last opinion it may be necessary to remark, that the Mosaic Law makes express mention of Criteria as to Virgins, the violation of whom is not therefore uninvestigable; and that the text here does not seem to make any such idea necessary. On the contrary: where, for instance, can be the wonder, or the difficulty of knowing, that a Serpent creeps over a rock, without leaving any trace or mark behind it, upon a surface too hard to admit an impression from any such cause? Or can it be difficult to know, that an Eagle flies, and a Ship swims, without leaving any mark of passage; can it be hard to know, that these things are so? But if the point be, how they are so, by what means these different advances are made, and upon what principles they are to be accounted for; then there is laid a regular and proper foundation for wonder, from the real difficulty of the several particulars. Besides: if the text be taken in the view of leaving

Agur perhaps here wonders at (in the last instance) and confesses himself a stranger to, may be those ways and practices, those arts and contrivances, used by some men, in their attempts upon innocent Virgins; who, because Virgins, and therefore unexperienced in such Practices, are the more liable to be betrayed to their ruin. And, that he means here to express his surprize, in a moral way, at the wickedness of some men, might be inferred from the verse following; where he speaks, in a moral way, of the wickedness of some women; and he introduces that remark, with comparing it to the very clause preceding — So (וְכִי of the same nature, and equally astonishing with the villainy of bad men, is the impudence of profligate women) So, or such, is the way of an adulterous woman; she eateth, and wipeeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickedness. That such female effrontery is just matter of astonishment, and is certainly so considered in holy Scripture, appears from Jerem. 3, 3: thou hadst a whore's forehead, thou refusedst to be ashamed.

This interpretation is strengthened by what we read in Wagenseil's confutation of Lipman the Jew, p. 405 — *Mirè sollicitus est Viri animus; deliberans, examinans, impetuose properans, æstuans, impatiens, cuncta alia fastidians, artes ac insidias excogitans; idque omne (bealma) CIRCA VIRGINEM, quam impotenter deamat: quod ipsum studium, vel viæ genus, tanto fit mirabilius, quanto purior, magisque conclusa vel recondita est (Alma) virgo illibata; illic namque tanto plus inflammatum desiderium, juxta vulgatum — Nitimur in vetitum, &c.*

The word וְכִי is derived from אֲבִי absconditus fuit. And the reason generally given is, quia domi adhuc latitat, & abscondita est virgo. But, as אֲבִי signifies PUER; the true reason of the preceding derivation probably is, quia abscondita & non adhuc a viro detecta fuit nuditas ejus — agreeably to the general Scripture phraseology; and agreeably, in particular, to Gen. 24; where Rebekah, of whom it is said (v. 16) neither had any man known her, is called וְכִי virgin, in ver. 43.

no trace &c. then the three first images here have been chosen only to illustrate the fourth; which is neither countenanced by this text itself, nor at all agrees with the instances of Fours in verses 21, 24 and 29. And as to Wisdom 5, 10—12; from whence the notion has been borrowed, and applied to this text of Proverbs: it may fairly be inferred, that the Author of the book of Wisdom did not copy from this text in Proverbs, because the modes of expression, and the applications, are exceedingly different; and the very Images themselves are not the same: in the one, an eagle, a serpent, a ship; in the other, a ship, a bird, and an arrow.

To

To this derivation may be added the following observation. *Si עלמה sit nomen commune omnibus fœminis minorennibus; tum omnino consequens est, nullum in universâ Heb. linguâ suppetere vocabulum, quo vere Virgo significetur: id quod in linguam tam sanctam, & a qua reliquæ omnes quodammodo natæ sunt, minime cadere posse videtur. Neque enim voces נערה & בתולה allegare licet. Quippe prima tantum est ætatis vox, & quoque conjugatam denotat. Altera vero, בתולה, viduatam lugentemque vitâ defunctum maritum innuit; Joel 1, 8. See Lochner's Dissert. tom. 1. p. 694; Thesaurus Theologico-Philologicus; Amstel. 1701.*

The proper inference from these several remarks is — that, if the true meaning of the preceding passage in the *Proverbs* has been here ascertained; then we have the sense of the word עלמה (*virgin*) fixed in this, uniformly with every other passage — if this explanation be but *probable*; it confirms the other instances — and, if it be but *possible*; yet even then this passage is rescued from being a necessary and decisive proof against interpreting this word *virgin*. Excepting this one obscure passage, the word clearly signifies *virgin* every where; and this sense is precisely determined in *Cantic*. 6, 8: *threescore QUEENS, and fourscore CONCUBINES, and VIRGINS without number.*

If any learned man should doubt the *probability* of the preceding interpretation of this celebrated Text, in the *Proverbs*; I would now (after having attempted an answer, upon the *first* supposition that *the printed Hebrew* is here entirely *right*) offer to his consideration another (and perhaps more satisfactory) solution, founded upon the *second* supposition beforementioned; which is — that *one letter* in one word here may be now *wrong*.

'Tis exceedingly remarkable, that *not one* of the ancient *Versions* renders the word עלמה here, as signifying *virgo* or *puella*; but they all agree in rendering it, as signifying *adulescentia*. One of the Hebrew words for *adulescentia* is עלומים; or, as it is expressed in MSS at least 15 times, עלמים; just as נעורים *juventus* is printed without the ו, in at least 7 places (*Gen*. 8, 21: *1 Sam*. 12, 2; 17, 33: *2 Sam*. 19, 8: *1 King*. 18, 12: *Jer*. 3, 4 and 32, 30; Edit. *Van der Haoght* — and in the MSS there are at least 150 instances of the *Vau* being omitted in this same word, only in the 7 places here specified) and an improper insertion or omission of *this letter* will be more readily allowed, than that of any other. But farther: as the *Syriac* version signifies here *adulescentia sua*; and as the *Arabic* also, evidently translated in this chapter from the *Greek*, has the same pronoun (which pronoun therefore was probably in the *old Greek* copies) there is great reason to believe, that the word בעלמה might formerly

formerly be בעלמיו *in adolescentia sua*, agreeably to the preceding Versions. 'Tis also very observable; that, tho' the printed Vulgat reads here *in adolescentia*, several old Latin MSS have *in adolescentia sua*; in exact conformity with the Syriac and the Arabic. See *Harleian* MSS N^o 2804, 2834, 2837; and J. E. 9, P. 15, in the King's library, now also in the British Museum. The same is also the reading in the Bodleian MSS, N^o 674, 1307, 1858, 1967, 2022, 2032, 3563, 3564, 3587, 3700, 4047, 4053: and in one of three Latin MSS, in my own possession. Thus also read the *Lambeth* MSS, N^o 3 and 89. And now, as to the sense of this passage: very *wonderful* certainly, and very unaccountable, are the *ways of a man* IN HIS YOUTH; many of them as hard to be reconciled to reason, and as difficult to be accounted for by the wisest men, as were (in antient times) the *ways* and motions either of an *eagle*, or of a *serpent*, or of a *ship*. Not that these are the only matters of surprize in the world; for it is also wonderful (כן *so, equally surprizing* is it) that any *woman* can become so very profligate, as to *know no shame*: but can boast of her *innocence and virtue*, tho' notorious even for *whoredom and adultery*!

The whole of this concluding remark is founded, not upon empty Conjecture; but upon that strong evidence, which results from *all* the antient *Versions* combined. For, tho' there may be instances, in which all these Versions agree with each other, and also with the printed Hebrew, and yet such printed Hebrew may *not* be true; yet it will be very difficult to produce an instance, in which these Versions *differ* from the printed Hebrew, but agree all together in a sensible and consistent reading, which is *false*: especially, if the Hebrew word, as printed, be attended with real difficulty; and if that word, with a small alteration, would express the very sense of all these Versions, and be perfectly consistent with the Context — which conditional circumstances all concur in reading (for בעלמה) בעלמיו, *the way of a man* IN HIS YOUTH.

It is hoped, that no one Reader of the preceding remarks, concerning בעלמיו *in adolescentia sua*, will ingeniously conceal the authority of *the Antient Versions*, on which so much stress is here laid; and then represent this notion to the Public as a groundless reverie, of *modern date*, which never before was heard of. Every candid Reader will think this caution reasonable; perhaps, he will think it necessary; when he finds that no less a Writer than *the Lord Bishop of Gloucester*, in the *Preface* to his late *Doctrine of Grace*, is pleased to laugh at an opinion of mine, which was founded upon the combined evidence of the

Syriac

Syriac Version and the *Chaldee Paraphrase*; treating it with pleasantry as a ridiculous and unsupported whim, of modern date; and carefully concealing those two Authorities I had produced, which would have shewn the opinion to be almost 1700 years old. This Author, on another occasion (*Remarks on Occasional Reflect.* par. 2, pag. 63) has declared, that *he can easily forgive the false Quotation for the sake of so much Wit*. But I dare not agree with His Lordship; as to the *venial* nature of *misrepresentation*, in matters of real importance. And such an opinion was the less to be expected among the *Remarks* just referred to; because the Author, in the *Preface* to those *Remarks*, speaks with solemnity of *Truths of great importance, which are, by the assistance of God's Holy Spirit, discoverable by those, who devote themselves to the Study of the Scriptures WITH A PURE MIND*. And, in the *Remarks* themselves, he emphatically complains of, and prints in the old black letter, **Six Misrepresentations**. I shall not add farther to this very long Note; but shall reserve for the Supplement some other Remarks, by way of *Self-defence*, which his Lordship has lately made necessary.

9. *Illud autem Virgo concipiet quanto excellentiorem habet sensum si referatur ad eam, quæ ita concepit ut Virgo post conceptum maneret; quod soli MARIE evenit.* Grotius on Matt. 1, 22.

10. In the Greek version, called the LXX, made before the time of CHRIST, the Jews properly rendered the Hebrew word here by *παρθενος* a virgin. But, about an hundred years after CHRIST's Ascension, *Aquila* (who had been excommunicated by the Christians) and afterwards *Theodotion* and *Symmachus*, in their new Greek versions, altered this word to *νεανίς* a young woman. See *Origen. Hex.* by *Montfauc.* See also *Irenæ.* p. 253; and *Justin Mar.* p. 224, 280, 285, 291, 319. In this last page Justin very properly infers, from the magnificence and wonder expressed in the context, the great absurdity of this new rendering — *Ἰδὲ, φησιν, ἡ νεανίς ἐν γαστρὶ ἔξει, ὡς μεγάλων πραγμάτων σημαινόμενων, εἰ γυνὴ ἀπο συνουσίας τέλει ἐμελλεν, ὅπερ πασὴν αἰ νεανίδες γυναῖκες ποιοῦσι πλην τῶν στείρων.* And, in the same page — *Εἰ γὰρ ὁμοίως τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀπασὶ πρεσβυτέρους καὶ οὗτος γενναῶς ἐκ συνουσίας ἐμελλε, τί καὶ ὁ Θεὸς σημεῖον, ὃ μὴ πᾶσι τοῖς πρεσβυτέρους κριγόν ἐστιν, ἐλεγε ποιεῖν; Ἀλλ' ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἀληθὺς σημεῖον, καὶ πιστὸν τῷ γενεῶν τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐμελλε γενεῶν, τέλει διὰ παρθενικῆς μήτρας τὸν πρεσβυτέρου τῶν πάντων ποιημάτων σαρκηποιοῦντα ἀληθὺς παιδίον γενεῶν, πρεσβυτέρων αὐτοῦ διὰ τὸ πρεσβυτικὸν πνεῦμα. — πρεσβεύει, ἵνα ὅταν γεννηταί, δυναμει καὶ βελή τῃ τῶν ὁλῶν Ποιητῆ γενόμενον γινώσκη.*

11. Some expositors have applied this 16th verse also to the Messiah; rendering the words, *in less time than the child &c.* But, besides that the use of *Shear-jashub* (see pag. 19) would be hereby set aside, and the *difference* of the plural and singular *addresses* (as varied very remarkably from the House of David to the King) would become less distinct by the *sameness* of the *child*; it is much more natural to render בטרם *before* — agreeably to the acknowledged sense of this particle elsewhere, particularly in the 4th verse of the next chapter. For the very same phrase ידע הנער בטרם BEFORE *the child* (or *this child*) *shall know* is there used, upon a second prediction delivered against these same Enemies; with the circumstances of a second son of Isaiah, called also by a Prophetic name, expressing the (then nearer) destruction of these Enemies: which prediction is likewise accompanied with an illustrious prediction of the Messiah. And these 7th and 8th chapters treat of different Sons of the Prophet, and are manifestly distinct; tho' they have sometimes been very strangely mixed, and confounded with one another.

12. See 2 Kin. 16, 2: and 2 Chron. 28; 2, 6.

13. The grandfather of Ahaz *strengthened himself exceedingly, fortified Jerusalem, built towers in the desert, and had an army of above 300,000 men, who made war with mighty power: 2 Chron. 26, 8 — 15.* And the father of Ahaz *built castles and towers, and became mighty: 2 Chron. 27, 4 — 6.*

14. Vitringa justly observes, that it is of considerable consequence to the explanation of this passage of Scripture, to mark the history distinctly. And that very learned Writer seems to have clearly proved, that there were *two* expeditions undertaken against Judea by Rezin and Pekah; that one against the *Country* was successful, but the other against *Jerusalem* unsuccessful: and that their success against the Country was in the *first* year of Ahaz, but their attempt upon the Metropolis was in the second. To that excellent Commentary I refer the Reader for proofs of these particulars. But we may here just observe, how very improbable it is, that the first march of these Kings should have been directly to the Capital, thro' a Country so *well fortified*; and that Ahaz and his people should have been so vastly terrified, and shut themselves all up in Jerusalem, if the army of Ahaz had been then unvanquished, and either equal to that of his Grandfather (300,000 men) or had made even a third part of that number.

number. Whereas: if we consider, that in the first year of Ahaz, these combined Kings had laid waste his Country, destroyed his fortified *Places*, killed 100,000 of his *Soldiers*, and carried away 200,000 of his *Subjects*; then we do not so much wonder, either that these two Kings should in the year following make themselves sure of the Conquest of Jerusalem, or that such an universal panic should seize the Jews at the first notice they received of this enterprize.

15. See 2 *Chron.* 28; 6, 8.

16. See Note 14; and *Vitring.* pag. 170.

17. See *Isai.* 7, 6; and *Vitring.* pag. 174.

18. There were made by God to David *two* promises; one relating to *Solomon and his posterity*, which was *conditional*; the other, relating to *the Messiah*, which was *absolute*. See *The true Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion* (by Jefferies) p. 134—138: and also *A Review of the Controversy &c.* (by Ditto) p. 63, 64; 156, 157. If the divine promise to David was not twofold (partly conditional, as to a race of Kings in general, and partly absolute, as to one King in particular) then it must be allowed, that the perpetuity of dominion and the everlasting kingdom, promised to David's family, tho' understood by many of the Jews as meant of an uninterrupted succession of temporal Kings descended from David, was really meant of one Son of David, of that one spiritual Prince THE MESSIAH, upon whose shoulder was to be the government; and of the increase of whose government and peace there was to be no end; upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, even for ever. *Isai.* 9; 6, 7.

The future birth of *the Messiah*, in the family of David, promised to David himself, and thus understood by him, is a point of great importance in itself, and particularly so in the discussion of the present subject. And tho' this matter appears from other parts of Scripture (as from the words just before quoted from *Isaiah*) to have been well known, and considered as certain; yet it is not easy for us to find such direct proof of this, as is naturally expected and desired. But, in the Speech of David himself, addressed to God, on occasion of the Divine Promise delivered by Nathan, there is a passage; which, tho' very obscure and nearly unintelligible in our present translation, seems to have been happily illustrated by my learned Friend Mr PETERS, in the late *Pre-*

face to his *Dissertation upon Job*. The passage, here meant, is contained in 2 Sam. 7, 19; and 1 Chro. 17, 17: and as that Critical Explanation of the words is curious in itself, and very applicable to the case before us; I shall now extract the principal parts of it.

The substance of the message from God to David is this — *I will set up thy seed, and establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son: If he commit iniquity, I will chastise him — But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul — thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.* Here are plainly some things that relate to Solomon: and some of a higher nature, relating to a throne and a kingdom that shall be FOR EVER. The repetition of this last particular is very observable — It was this that struck David — For he said unto the Lord; *Who am I, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord God; but thou hast spoken ALSO of thy servant's house for a great while to come; AND IS THIS THE MANNER OF MAN, O Lord God?*

In this last clause there is no interrogation in the Hebrew, but a direct assertion; וְזֶה חֹק אָדָם — literally, *And this is the law of THE ADAM, or THE MAN*. David could not but observe, that this message was prophetic; relating to his Seed, whose kingdom should be established. *He shall build an house for my name*, says God; this Solomon did: *and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever*; not in Solomon's hand surely; this could never be the meaning, nor could David apprehend it so. If any Jews have interpreted this of a temporal kingdom; and such as was intended for their nation only, to raise them to the height of glory; they have gone contrary to fact and to their own prophets: who speak of the kingdom of *the Messiah* as everlasting and universal, and therefore (to be sure) a spiritual one. *His dominion is everlasting*; says Daniel, of *the Son of Man*: an appellation, not very different from that of *Adam* or *the Man*. The following Prophets are good interpreters of those that went before them. And as Daniel saw *the son of man* invested with *an everlasting kingdom*; so when David heard the great promise made him, he concludes that this could be no other than the kingdom of *the son of man*, or *the second man*, the promised Redeemer — *This surely can be no other than the law, the fixed decree, concerning that other Adam, or Man, that hath been so long promised us; that seed of the woman, who is to*
bruise

bruise the serpent's head; that seed of Abraham &c. — now declared to be the son of David, whose Kingdom shall be established for ever.

The speech of David, in the verses following (2 Sam. 7, 20 &c.) is such, as one might naturally expect from a person overwhelmed with the greatness of the promised blessing: for it is abrupt, full of wonder, and fraught with repetitions. *And now, what can David say more unto thee? What indeed! For thou, LORD GOD, knowest thy servant: thou knowest the hearts of all men, and see'st how full my own heart is. For thy word's sake, for the sake of former prophecies; and according to thine own heart, from the mere motive of thy wisdom and goodness; hast thou done all these great things to make thy servant know them.* I now perceive the reason of those miraculous providences, which have attended me from my youth up; *taken from following the sheep, and conducted thro' all difficulties to be ruler of thy people: and shall I distrust the promise now made me? Thy word is truth.*

The parallel place in the history is this, in 1 Chron. 17, 17 — *And yet this was a small thing in thine eyes, O God: for thou hast also spoken of thy servant's house for a great while to come, AND HAST REGARDED ME ACCORDING TO THE ESTATE OF A MAN OF HIGH DEGREE, O Lord God.* The original words are וראיתני כְּתוּר הָאָדָם הַמַּעֲלָה — literally, & respexisti me secundum dispositionem Adami illius futuri, or superni. The word מַעֲלָה, as a substantive, is used for a step, stair, or ascent; as an adverb, it signifies supra, as to time and place. The meaning therefore must be — *and hast regarded me according to the order, or disposition, of the future Adam, or the Man from above: thou hast regarded me, in the order of thy providence, as one from whom the second Adam, or Man (the Redeemer) is to descend.*

The words אָדָם הַמַּעֲלָה are no where put for a man of high degree; much less הָאָדָם the man, as here. One certain person is plainly denoted: and who can that be, but the same St Paul speaks of (Rom. 5, 14) where he saith, THE FIRST Adam was a figure of THE FUTURE. Or if you take the word here in its other sense; then אָדָם הַמַּעֲלָה will be (in the very identity of the phrase) ὁ ἀνω ἀνθρώπος, supernus homo: and who can that be, but the same person, whom John the Baptist calls ὁ ἀνωθεν ἐρχομενος, he that cometh FROM ABOVE? CHRIST himself saith (Joh. 8, 23) I am from above: and St Paul (1 Cor. 15, 47) the second man is the Lord from heaven. St Paul then, well read in the Old Testament, had doubtless this passage (and perhaps others, as yet undiscovered by us)

in his view ; when he drew that parallel between the *first* and *second* Adam. I shall only add, that the Chald. Paraphrase (2 Sam. 7, 19) directly points at *the Messiah* ; signifying, *thou hast spoken of thy servant's house for THE AGE TO COME* : and every one knows, that by *the age to come* were meant *the days of the Messiah*. This is a vision therefore, or a fresh prediction, of that great and universal blessing to the sons of men. I shall close this large extract with one inference ; which is — If the preceding Criticism be true ; then may we see clearly the chief foundation of what St Peter tells us (*Act. 2, 30*) concerning DAVID : that *being a prophet, and KNOWING that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up CHRIST &c.*

19. That the more religious amongst the Jews did, in this distress, resort to the Temple : and there, pouring forth their Supplication, wait for a gracious Answer from God ; seems evident from *Psal. 48, 9* : *we waited for thy loving kindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple*. For 'tis highly probable, that this was the very Psalm of Thanksgiving, which was composed upon the deliverance of Jerusalem from these two Kings ; who came, and saw, and fled. *For lo ! the kings met, they passed by together : they saw, they marvelled ; they were troubled, they hasted away : fear seized them there ; pain, as of a woman in travail : AS THE EAST-WIND DASHETH IN PIECES THE SHIPS OF TARSHISH*. This is the natural construction of the last hemistich (with כִּירוֹחַ for כִּירוֹחַ, on the authority of MSS) instead of the present unconnected and unmeaning sentence — *thou breakest the ships of the sea thro' the east-wind*. But, of this Psalm see more hereafter.

20. These words are near the conclusion of *Psal. 89* ; a Psalm, which, in very animated and pathetic language, is an Expostulation with God, from the Jews ; when they were in the utmost distress, full of fears for *the House of David* ; enumerating the promises of God concerning David's Seed, and a Son of David who was to reign for ever. And this Expostulation was made, when the King was young, when his enemies had *broken down his strong holds, spoiled his country, and obtained victory over him in battle* : all which circumstances remarkably agree with the case of Ahaz, shut up in Jerusalem, for fear of his victorious enemies. If then the preceding note has discovered, in *Psal. 48*, the Hymn of Praise, which was composed upon the *Retreat* of these two Kings ; perhaps
this

this 89th Psalm contains their solemn Prayer, when these Kings were marching towards Jerusalem, with the most hostile designs against the Jews in general, and the House of David in particular. And, if so; then the Prophecy, delivered in the Text of the preceding Sermon, will still more evidently appear to have been graciously vouchsafed to the House of David; as carrying with it the very Consolation wanted, under the severest part of their Distress; and as containing a Reply from God to their Expostulation. Other remarks on this Psalm will be inserted hereafter.

21. When they invaded Judea the year before, they put to death one of the King's Sons (then probably at some house in the country) tho' he was too young to be in arms against them. For Ahaz was then but 21 years of age, according to the Heb. Text. And if, according to the Greek (Vat. Ed.) Syr. and Arab. versions of 2 Chron. 21, 1, he really was 26; his son Maaseiah could scarce be more than 10 years of age, when slain: 2 Chron. 28, 7.

22. *Achaz verbis honestis, animo autem impio, quippe abjecta omni in Deum fiducia, hoc signum recusavit.* Grotius, Matt. 1, 22. Ahaz seemed evidently to entertain at this time those very sentiments, which he afterwards expressed. We read, in 2 Chron. 28; 22, 23: *And in the time of his distress did he trespass yet more against the LORD: this is that king Ahaz. For he sacrificed unto the gods of Damascus, which smote him: and he said, Because the gods of the kings of Syria help them, therefore will I sacrifice to them, that they may help me.* Here the words *this is king Ahaz* (הוא המלך אחז) come in so very oddly, as to furnish a suspicion of some mistake; but, when considered together with those which follow them, they will scarce leave any doubt of a great corruption. The learned Mr HALLET has remarked upon these words, in a manner worthy the Reader's attention: and part of his Criticism here follows. *This is that king Ahaz. For he sacrificed unto the gods of Damascus, which smote him.* This passage, says he, greatly surprized me. For the sacred historian himself is here represented as saying, that the gods of Damascus had smitten Ahaz. But 'tis impossible to suppose, that the inspired author should be capable of saying this. The Scripture every where most justly represents all the heathen idols as *nothing* and *vanity*, and as incapable of doing either good or hurt. Whereas in this place the divine Author is represented as saying, that the gods of Damascus had power to do hurt, and had actually smitten

smitten Ahaz. I am sensible, commentators, who are resolved to defend the *Hebrew Verity* (as they call it) i.e. the present Hebrew copies, will strain to make the words consist with truth. But it must be very great straining indeed, to make these words *not* to imply, that the author thought, the gods of Damascus had smitten Ahaz. All this difficulty is avoided, if we follow the old Hebrew copies, from which the Greek translation was made; which reads thus: *And king AHAZ SAID, I WILL SEEK to the gods of Damascus, who smote ME.* And then it follows both in Hebrew and Greek: *And he said, Because the gods of the kings of Syria help them &c.* Ahaz intended to worship the gods of Syria, because they had (*as he foolishly thought*) smitten him, while he did not worship them; and helped the kings of Syria, who were their worshippers. It is more natural to suppose, that Ahaz said *both* these things, than that the sacred Historian should say *one* of them. &c. See the 2d volume of HALLET's *Notes*, 8vo. 1732; pag. 78 — 80.

23. The word, which begins the 13th verse, and introduces this address to the House of David, is ויאמר; which should be rendered here, as it is in verse the *third* of the same chapter, THEN *he said*.

24. *Non significat* נ (נכח) *præ sed apud; ut sensus sit,* an parva apud vos res est, h. e. *vestro judicio?* Sic מִירוּחַ apud Dominum, *judicio Domini:* Num. 32, 22. *Vitring.*

25. See Dr Pocock's Com. on *Mic.* 5, 3; and on *Hos.* 2, 14: Bp Chandler, *vol.* 1, pag. 158: and Nold. *signif.* 6.

26. *Proprie* הרה *est præsentis,* וְ *vertendum per concipit* utero: *convenit adeo, quod ad tempus, cum sequenti* יולדת, *quod proprie est parit.* Vox וקראת *est et vocabis; vel et vocabit,* quando ponitur pro וקראה. *Vitring.* As this last word cannot be the 2d per. pret. *sing.* because the address proceeds in the *plural* number; so it is properly the active partic. fem. signifying וְ *vocans;* agreeably to the two participles preceding: among other instances of this form, we read, אֶסְתֵּר נִשְׂאֵת חַן *Esther tollens gratiam:* *Esth.* 2, 15.

27. At his birth, he was called *JESUS.* But, as he was by nature *Immanuel;* that also is properly said to be his *name* or *title.* Thus *Isai.* 9, 6 — *and his name shall be called* (i.e. he shall be) *Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God &c.* And, that the

the same word *Immanuel* is also to be understood, as *the title of the Messiah*, in *Isai. 8, 8*; see *Vitring. p. 212, 213*. The Messiah was to be called *JESUS*, as his *proper and instituted name*; and this, by command of an Angel both to the reputed father, and to the real mother: *Matt. 1, 21*; *Luk. 1, 31*. But *the names*, by which he was to be called, arising from his *nature*, were various. Thus (not to repeat what is before quoted from *Isai. 9, 6*) in *Luk. 1, 35*: *The holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing, which shall be born of thee, SHALL BE CALLED The Son of God*. And because no one person upon earth could be so certain of the *true Nature* of the Son, as the Virgin Mother herself; She was particularly proper to describe that *nature*, by calling him and declaring him to be *IMMANUEL, God with us*. And perhaps she may allude to this *true nature* of the Messiah, when she says: *My soul doth magnify the Lord; and my spirit hath rejoiced in GOD MY SAVIOUR*. *Luk. 1; 46, 47*.

28. It is not pretended, that this division is entirely new. But it is certain, that it has been otherwise stated by our most eminent Writers. Bp KIDDER joins ver. 15 (*Butter and honey &c.*) with verse 16 (*For before the Child &c.*) in part the 2d of his *Demonstrat. Messias*. Bp CHANDLER does the same, very expressly; which is the more observable, because it has been asserted, in Dr Twells's Sermon (B. L. vol. 2, pag. 8) that this Prelate places the division between the 15th and 16th verses: tho' it is clearly placed by His Lordship between the 14th and 15th, and so the second Prophecy is made to begin at *Butter and honey*. 'Tis well known, that this Prelate considers *Isai. 7, 14*, two ways; either as a *typical* (and double) or a *literal single* prediction. The first solution has probably been shewn, in the preceding pages, to be indefensible. And, as to the second: when His Lordship had spoken of *Emanuel*, and verse the 14th; he says (vol. 1. p. 328) "Thus far the words are a direct promise of the miraculous birth of the Messias, by a virgin, and are addressed in the *plural* to the house of David. What follows is spoke to *Abaz* in the singular, with particular relation to his present danger. *Butter and honey shall he eat*; pointing (as may well be conceived) to the child *Shear-jashub* in his hand." Nothing therefore can be more certain, than that the Second Prophecy was begun by His Lordship at *Butyrum & mel comedet*; where there is not the least mark of *transition* from the Virgin's son to *Shear-jashub*, or from the House of David to King Ahaz. And yet,
groundless

groundless as this division is; it has been made by many other very learned and respectable Writers. A-Bp USHER states it thus, in his *Annals*. And Dr BENSON does the same, in his *Introduction*; in which he endeavours to show, *that no text of Scripture has more than one single sense*. See his *Paraphrase on the Epist.* 2d edit. *Introduct.* pag. 23 — 26.

29. The word העלמה signifies *the Virgin*; and means *that one only woman*, who was to conceive whilst a Virgin; and who was thus pointed out in the very first promise of a Messiah, He being therein described as *the seed of the woman*. It is therefore properly rendered *ἡ παρθένος* both by the LXX, and by St Matthew; and is rendered *the virgin* in our old English Bibles; at least, in such as were printed in the years 1570, 1578, 1589, 1596, 1599.

30. That *butter (or milk) & honey* should be here mentioned, chiefly in proof either of *plenty* in the days of the Messiah, or of *luxury* in his life; this would not be granted without difficulty, if there were no other reason fairly assignable for these words: but there seems to be no room for doubt, considering how exactly they express a meaning relative to the Messiah, which was necessary to be inculcated. The Learned well know the Errors of some, who have denied the real *Humanity*, as well as of others who have denied the real *Divinity* of CHRIST. And when the Jews heard, from the mouth of Isaiah, that the Messiah was to be *the Son of a Virgin* (therefore born miraculously) and to be *God with us*; would they not naturally have enquired farther, *What manner of child shall this be*, if they had not been still more fully instructed? This farther instruction they then received, in these words, *Butter and honey shall he eat &c.* signifying, that as he was to be born *an Infant*, so with *the common food of Infants* should he be nourished and brought up: and that the common food of Infants, in the East, really was *butter (or milk) and honey*, we learn from Authors of the best credit. Thus Vitringa — *observavit Bochartus, & multis firmatum dedit, lac et mel apud Veteres habitum esse communem cibum infantium — demonstravitque idem, mel salubritatis causa lacti junctum commendari. Sciendum, חמאה non tantum butyrum significare, sed & cremorem lactis; & esse hanc genuinam vocis notationem.* Pag. 188. Nor is it at all inconsistent with this explanation, that *butter (or milk) and honey* should also denote *plenty*. — The phrase may denote this, in ver. 22 of this same chapter, tho' in the midst of a minatory speech; on account of the *very few* persons, who

who should be left in the land: and certainly men might *themselves* eat the fat of the land, when there were very few to share therein, and no man to purchase of them. To the same purpose Vitranga comments on the words of the text — Sensus est, *Immannelem puerum educandum esse COMMUNI MORE, quum necessaria ad victum ex agris cultis, & ab hoste non occupatis ac vastatis, abunde suppeterent; & quidem ad tempus usus rationis.* Pag. 187.

31. It is matter of commendation justly due to the *old* English Versions, that the true sense of the Original is exactly and happily expressed in *them*, in many places; where our *present* English Version is improper, and has therefore been altered for the worse. Thus here; the rendering is *till* or *untill*, in the Bibles printed in the years 1570, 1572, 1578, 1589, 1596, 1599, 1602. Grotius, on *Isai.* 7, 15, says — (Ut ciat) *verte ex Hebræo, donec sciat: id est, donec is puer ad usum rationis pervenerit. Nam qui in prima sunt infantia describi solent per ignorantiam boni & mali. Deut. 1, 39.* See also Vitranga.

32. — *Nec mox integro Rationis usu gavisurum; sed, pro aliorum infantium more, vim rationis se cum tempore & profectu ætatis esse exerturam: quod idem de ipso testatur Lucas 2, 52.* Vitring. pag. 188.

33. See Dr MILL, on *Heb.* 13, 25; where he says — *Scripturæ Veteris Testamenti, non secundum Hebraicam Veritatem, quam vocant, sed LXX interpretum (in hac epistola) perpetuò citatæ: & quidem iis in locis, in quibus si reponerentur Hebræa, non modo periret vis argumentationis Apostolicæ, sed ne quidem ullus foret argumentationi locus. Hujusmodi sunt ista ex Psalmis, οὐκ ἐν ἁγίῳ πνεύματι καὶ λόγῳ; &c. pro quibus si reponas ea quæ sunt in Hebræo, ratiocinationis Paulinæ robur ac nervos omnes incideris.* See also Mr PIERCE (on *Heb.* x, 5) to whom I am indebted for a great part of the following criticism.

Next to the authority of the Apostle's reasoning, which should certainly have great weight with all Christians; let the Context in the Psalm be allowed to speak for itself; or rather, in proof of a corruption in this important passage. The general meaning of this passage in the Psalm is, that God was by no means pleased with Animal Sacrifices, on *their own* account; and that a time would come, when He would be no longer pleased with them, on *any* account; because they were to cease, upon the Sacrifice of the Messiah: and to the *Bodies of Brute Creatures*, before sacrificed, seems clearly opposed the *Body of the*

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Messiah

Messiah, to be sacrificed once for all. But farther: the words *אָזְנִים כָּרַעַת לִי* (*aures fodisti, parasti, mihi*) seem to be neither sense, nor Hebrew; and are very improperly considered, as alluding to the law of *boring one ear of a servant* (*Exod. 21, 6*) because neither the verb, nor the form of the noun, is the same as in the place supposed to be alluded to.

Mr MEDE (book 5, ch. 4) calls the variation of this passage in the Old and New Testaments *a most strange difference*. He asks, *What equipollency can be in sense between these two?* And he adds, *This difficulty is so much the more augmented, because most Interpreters make the life of the quotation to lie in those very words, where the difference is viz. that the words [a body thou hast prepared me] are brought by the Apostle to prove our Saviour's Incarnation; whereunto the words in the Psalm itself [mine ears hast thou bored, or digged, or opened] take them how you will, will in no wise suit — If the life of the quotation lay here, I cannot see, how it can possibly be reconciled.* 'Tis a wonder, that this learned Writer had not seen the necessity of doing here, what he has so happily done in other important passages of the Old Testament, correcting these by the LXX and the quotations in the New Testament. See *Book 4, Epist. 31 &c.*

It must be evident to every man acquainted with the Heb. language, that the present Hebrew here is very oddly expressed. And to many of those, who allow that the printed Text is at all corrupted, it will appear highly probable, that there is a corruption here — especially, if upon considering the following lines it be remarked carefully, that the 1st and 3d hemistichs, and the other parts of the 2d and 4th, are exegetical of one another; expressing the same meaning in different words — if it be also noted, that some particle at the head of the 2d hemistich is necessary, and that the particle *אֵן* is more proper than any other — and lastly, if it be observed how similar the letters *אֵזְנִים* are to *אֵזְנוֹה*; and that a copyist, who knew but little of the language, transcribing a MS defective in the lower half of the three last letters, might be easily led to express *אֵזְנִים* by *אֵזְנִים* instead of *אֵזְנוֹה*, and so form the common word *אֵזְנִים* *aures* instead of *אֵזְנוֹה tunc corpus*.

זֶבַח וּמִנְחָה לֹא חָפַצְתָּ — אֵזְנִים כָּרַעַת לִי:

עוֹלָה וְחַטָּאת לֹא שָׁאֵלְתָּ — אֵן אָמַרְתִּי הִנֵּה בָאתִי:

Sacrifice and meat-offering thou didst not delight in;

EARS DIDST THOU DIG (prepare) FOR ME.

*Burnt-offering and sacrifice for sin didst thou not require;
then said I, Lo! I come.*

זבח ומנחה לא חפצת — אז גוה כרית לי:
עולה וחטאה לא שאלת — אז אמרתי הנה באתי:

Sacrifice and meat-offering thou didst not delight in;

THEN A BODY DIDST THOU PREPARE FOR ME.

*Burnt-offering and sacrifice for sin didst thou not require;
then said I, Lo! I come.*

I shall conclude this Note with the following words of Mr HALLET. The enemies of our holy Religion have been industrious in observing, that there are great differences between the Old Testament and the New, with respect to the passages which are cited from the Old in the New. — It must be owned, the fact is true, that there is such a difference. But the Apostles are not at all accountable for it. — The reason, why the New Testament differs from the Old, is, because the Old now differs from what it was, when it was first written. When St Paul quotes the Psalmist as saying, *A body hast thou prepared me;* he differs widely from the present reading in the Psalm, which is *mine ears hast thou opened*. This is no fault in the Apostle; who quotes, as the Psalm was written: the Psalm has been since corrupted by the Jews in their transcribing it. See *the 2d vol. of Notes*; pag. 1. See also the learned Mr PILKINGTON's Remarks; p. 44, 45.

34. 'Tis presumed, that the three reasons here specified, when sufficiently considered, will convince the Reader, that *One Person* only was addressed in the last verse of the Text, and that *that Person* must have been *king Abaz*. Note also; that *king Abaz* is the person addressed, in the very words which immediately follow: *The Lord shall bring upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy father's house, days &c.*

35. Thus is כ' rendered in ver. 13; and it is so rendered in this very place, in our old Eng. Bibles, printed in 1535, 1537, 1539, 1549, 1550.

36. See *Genes.* 48, 16 (הנערים) so our Old English Bibles, printed in 1535, 1537, 1539, 1540, 1549, 1550, 1602, 1609.

37. Thus, amongst many other instances, which probably might be found, upon farther examination —

Gen. 19, 14: העיר THIS city.

— 29, 34: הפעם THIS time.

Deut.

<i>Deut.</i> 1, 39:	הַיּוֹם	THAT day.
— 4, 40:	הַיּוֹם	THIS day.
— 14, 26:	הַכֶּסֶף	THAT money.
<i>2 Sam.</i> 3, 8:	הָאִשָּׁה	THIS woman.
<i>2 Kin.</i> 2, 19:	הָעִיר	THIS city.
— 19, 29:	הַשָּׁנָה	THIS year.
<i>Esth.</i> 9, 4:	הָאִישׁ	THIS man.
<i>Psal.</i> 40, 4:	הַגִּבּוֹר	THAT man.

38 See the Editions printed in 1535, 1539, 1550.

39 There is an absolute necessity for attending to *this Action*, in several other sacred passages: as in *John* 2; 18, 19 — *What sign shewest thou — Destroy this temple — Our Saviour there pointing to his own Body.*

40. *Morientur Reges illi duo Syriæ et Israelis. Terram intellige utramque.* Grotius, upon *Isaiab.* The words תְּעֹזַב הָאֲדָמָה כִּי מָלְכֶיהָ שְׁנֵי מַפְנֵי קָץ אֲתָה אֲשֶׁר strictly signify — *forsoaken shall be that land, which thou abhorrest, of the presence of both her kings; i. e. (forsoaken) of both her kings.* These two Kings were not *Kings of Judea*, nor did they propose to be so. And the only application, which seems proper, is to take the Land or Country here, as signifying the two adjoining Kingdoms of Israel and Syria, formed into a league of Union, and therefore considered as one (so far like *England* and *Scotland* called now *Great Britain*) but as governed by the two Kings *Pekab* and *Rezin*; the former of whom was slain by *Hoshea*, and the latter by the *King of Assyria*.

41. 'Tis surprising to see, with what inconsistency, as well as with what rancour, the Evangelical application of this passage was attacked by Mr *Collins*, in that celebrated effort of Deism, *The Grounds and Reasons &c.* Amongst other articles, he is copious on that of *the Sign*; on the absurdity and impossibility, of the Messiah's Birth having been a sign given (as he always falsely states it) to *Abaz*. But why is a *future Sign* (or a thing future mentioned as a sign) so absurd, or so impossible? Mr *Collins* tells his Readers — *God gave Gideon and Hezechiab immediate Signs to prove that he spoke to them; and that the things promised to them should come to pass. Had he given them remote Signs, how could they have known, that the Signs themselves would ever have come to pass? And how could those Signs evi-*
dence

dence any thing? Those Signs would have stood in need of other Signs to manifest, that God would perform them in Time. See pag. 39. But, are all other Signs then, except immediate, absurd or impossible? May there, can there, be no propriety in a Sign remote or future? Why, yes: this very Writer, in the very same page, really does allow, that a Prophecy of the certain Birth of a male Child, to be born within A YEAR OR TWO, seems a PROPER Sign; as being not only what could not with certainty be foretold, except by a Person inspired by God; but as immediately or SOON coming to pass, and consequently evidencing itself to be a DIVINE Sign, and answering all the purposes of a Sign. And such a Sign is agreeable to the divine conduct on the like occasions. It is therefore granted by this very Writer, that a Sign may be proper and worthy of God; tho' it be future and remote, and such as the bearers could not THEN know would ever come to pass!

42. In ch. 8 of Dr Pocock's Miscellan. Notes (Edit. Twells, p. 239 &c.) are several passages quoted from Kimchi's works, which are now printed differently from the manner, in which they were at first written. One of these passages relates to *Isai.* 7, 14; in which that Rabbi, in opposition to the Christians, says — העלמה אינה בתולה (כדברי התועים) אלא עלמה; *Haalmah non est Virgo* (SECUNDUM VERBA ERRANTIUM) *verum Almah idem valet ac Naarah, sive virgo sive nupta fuerit.* Hence we may fairly infer the reason; why such endeavours have been used to explain away the obvious and natural meaning of this word: namely, on account of the words and arguments of the erroneous, or the heretics i. e. CHRISTIANS (דברי התועים and מינים) which words are omitted in the later editions.

Kimchi, arguing here improperly, as if the Sign (concerning Almah) was promised to Ahaz, reasons thus — *Sensus sectionis manifesto destruit verba ipsorum; quoniam, cum Achaz metu affectus esset ob duos reges istos, ne caperent Jerusalem, Deus illi signum dederit, quo crederet ipsos eam non capturos; quod si signum illud fuerit res Jesu, uti asserunt, quid esset signi Achazæ res, quæ post illud fuit annis plus quam 400; aut quomodo confirmaretur animus ipsius re, quæ ipsius tempore non fuit?* Here this famous Rabbi infers very rightly, but from a false principle; and his argument is overthrown, by referring the Promise of the Sign, not to Ahaz in particular, but in general to the House of David; agreeably to the express words of the Prophet.

43. *If Christ agreed only to SOME of the Prophetic Characters, these would never prove him The Messiah: but the want of OTHERS, nay though it were but of ONE, would infallibly prove him not so. See a Review of the Controversy &c. (by Jefferies) p. 85.*

We may now close these observations with an application of the Prophet's words, that *Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; whose name is called WONDERFUL*, (amongst other reasons) on account of his *Birth*. It seems to have been a just mark of Dignity, that the Author of Nature should be distinguished by not being born after the common course of Nature: and having ever been, as no other Being was, *THE SON OF GOD*, He became, what no other ever was, *THE SON OF A VIRGIN*. Thus, being to suffer as a *Sacrifice* by shedding his blood for Mankind, *He was born after the likeness of men*: and yet, being also *the Lord from Heaven*; it was proper, that a *Body should be prepared for Him*, and that his Birth should be miraculous. And lastly: since we learn from the prophecy recorded by Moses, that the Messiah was at first promised by God, as *the seed of the Woman*; and since we find, He was afterwards foretold by the prophet *Isaiah*, as *the son of a Virgin*; we may well say — *Thus it is written, and thus it behoved CHRIST to be BORN.*

WE HAVE THEREFORE FOUND HIM; OF WHOM MOSES
IN THE LAW, AND THE PROPHETS, DID WRITE.

S U P P L E M E N T.

AT the end of three of the preceding Notes (sc. 8, 19 and 20) a reference was made to some farther remarks; which, as they would have too much interrupted the Reader in those places, were reserved for a Supplement. The first of these particulars, in Note 8, relates to *The Lord Bishop of Gloucester*; the second, in Note 19, to the 48th Psalm; and the third, in Note 20, to the 89th Psalm. His Lordship will excuse me, if I first submit to the Learned some observations on these two Psalms; and then, by way of Self-Defence, consider those reflections, which he has thought proper to publish against *me* and *the Collation of the Hebrew MSS*, in the *Preface* to his *Doctrine of Grace*, and in the *late Edition* of his *Divine Legation*.

But previously to either of these three particulars, I shall here briefly recapitulate the chief points of the History, which have been already mentioned: particularly, for the sake of subjoining the whole Translation of the Text, at one view, agreeably to the Corrections before proposed. And after this Translation, will be given the words of the Text in Hebrew.

In the first year of Ahaz, the kings of Syria and Israel jointly invaded Judea, ravaged the Country, destroyed great part of the Army of Ahaz, and carried away multitudes of his People. A Son was born to Isaiah, as supposed, about the time of this Captivity; because the prophet called him *Shear-jashub* (a name signifying *a remnant, or the remainder, shall return*) probably intending by that prophetic name to comfort his brethren with the assurance, that these Captives should certainly return home. The country of Judea being thus open, and the power of the Jews greatly diminished: the confederate Kings agreed, in the next year, to attack the Capital City; and, making sure of success, determined to remove the House of David from the throne, and to establish in Jerusalem an Heathen King: the news of which threw Ahaz and his People into the utmost consternation.

GOD, tho' He was resolved to punish this King and his Subjects, yet being resolved also to defeat this attack upon the holy City, commanded Isaiah to take with him his son Shear-jashub — to go and meet Ahaz at the place of the most public concourse — and there to assure THE KING, that the scheme against Jerusalem should not come to pass. And, in proof of this, the Prophet offered a Miracle; which the King refused. On this, Isaiah addressed himself to THE HOUSE OF DAVID; to assure

assure the more religious amongst them, that God had not forgotten his promises to their Father, particularly the promise of a *Messiah*, who was to descend from David's family, and whose Birth should be miraculous. For, that He should be *conceived and born of a Virgin*; and that He should *live some time upon earth*, uniting in Himself the *Divine* and *Human* natures; and thus become as truly MAN, as He had before been truly GOD.

But, lastly; these declarations may be supposed to have rather excited the ridicule of the idolatrous King, as not appearing to him at all consolatory, or even pertinent to their present distress. Wherefore the Prophet (no doubt by the command of God likewise) addressed himself, in the second place, particularly to *the King*; assuring him (and not only *him*, but *the people* also at the same time) that those two Kings, who were advancing with such rage against Jerusalem, should not only not succeed against it, but should very soon (before that *that Child*, then with the Prophet, should be able to *distinguish good from evil*) be both cut off, each in his own country. And yet, tho' this enterprise of theirs against Jerusalem and the House of David would fail, on account of God's Promises; God would bring upon Ahaz signal and uncommon vengeance: which was to be inflicted by the hands of those very men, the ASSYRIANS, to whom Ahaz was then about to apply for succour.

Isai. 7, 3. Then said the Lord unto Isaiab, Go forth now to meet Abaz, thou and Shear-jashub thy son; at the end of the conduit of the upper pool — 4. And say unto him, Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither be faint-hearted — for the fierce anger of Rezin and the son of Remaliab. 5. Because they have taken evil counsel against thee, saying: 6. Let us go up against Judah, and vex it — and let us set a king in the midst of it, even the son of Tabeal. 7. Thus saith the Lord God, It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass — 9 — if ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established. 10. Moreover the Lord spake again unto Abaz, saying: 11. Ask thee a sign [or miracle] of the Lord thy God — 12. But Abaz said, I will not ask; neither will I tempt the Lord.

13. THEN he said; Hear YE now, O house of David: Is it a small thing with you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also?
14. Nevertheless Jehovah himself will give to you a sign [or miracle]: Behold! the virgin shall

conceive, and bear a son, and call his name Immanuel. 15. Milk and honey shall be eat; till he shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good. 16. But before this child [pointing to his own son] shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good; the land, that THOU abhorrest, shall be forsaken of both her kings.

17. The Lord shall bring upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy father's house, days that have not come, from the day that Ephraim departed from Judah; even the king of Assyria. &c.

13. ויאמר שמעו נא בית דוד המעט מכם
הלאות אנשים כי תלאו גם את אלהי : 14. לכן
יתן אדני הוה לכם אור הנה העלמה הרה
וילדת בן וקראה שמו עמנואל : 15. חמאה
ודבש יאכל לדעתו מאוס ברע ובחור בטוב :
16. כי בטרם ידע הנער מאוס ברע ובחור
בטוב תעזב האדמה אשר אתה קץ מפני שני
מלכיה :

The recapitulation being thus made, and the translation with the original of the Text being given; I proceed now to PSALM the 48th. And here, I shall insert the Hebrew Text, as at present printed, in its Prose form; placing, on the opposite page, that English Version of it, which is now in common use; and adding a few remarks. And if any one should be desirous of knowing my opinion about any other parts of this Psalm, or the proper arrangement of it in general; he may consult the two pages, which follow the remarks: where he will find the Verses somewhat differently divided, and accompanied with a new translation. After the second scheme of this Psalm, will follow the whole of PSALM the 89th, as it is now printed; (excepting, that it is here disposed as *Poetry*, instead of *Prose*, and with a vacant *space* after each of the *Parts* into which it is divided) and to this Psalm also some remarks will be subjoined.

1. שִׁיר מִזְמוֹר לְבִנֵי קֹרַח :
2. גִּדּוֹל יְהוָה וּמַהֲלֵל מְאֹד בַּעִיר אֱלֹהֵינוּ הָרִקְדָּשׁוּ :
3. יָפָה נוֹף מְשׁוּשׁ כָּל הָאָרֶץ הָרִיקְדָּשׁוּ יִרְכָּתִי צִפּוֹן קִרְיַת מֶלֶךְ רַב :
4. אֱלֹהִים בְּאַרְמְנוֹתֶיהָ נוֹדַע לְמִשְׁגַּב :
5. כִּי הִנֵּה הַמְּלָכִים נִוְעְדוּ עָבְרוּ יַחְדָּו :
6. הִמָּה רָאוּ כֵן תִּמְהוּ נִבְהָלוּ נִחְפְּזוּ :
7. רַעְדָּה אַחֲזָתָם שֵׁם חֵיל כִּי־לָדָה :
8. בְּרוּחַ קֳדִים תִּשְׁבֶּר אֲנִיּוֹת תִּרְשִׁישׁ :
9. כַּאֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְנוּ כֵּן רָאִינוּ בַּעִיר יְהוּדָה צְבָאוֹת בַּעִיר אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֱלֹהִים יְכוֹנְנָה עַד עוֹלָם סֶלָה :
10. דָּמִינוּ אֱלֹהִים חֶסֶדךָ בִּקְרֵב הִיכַלְךָ :
11. כִּשְׁמֶךָ אֱלֹהִים כֵּן תִּהְלֶתְךָ עַל קְצוֹי אֶרֶץ צֶדֶק מִלֵּאָה יִמִּינְךָ :
12. יִשְׂמַח הָרִיקְדָּשׁוּ תִּגְלָנָה בְּנוֹת יְהוּדָה לְמַעַן מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ :
13. סִבּוּ צִיּוֹן וְהִקִּיפוּהָ סִפְרוּ מַגְדְּלֶיהָ :
14. שִׁיתוּ לְבַבְכֶּם לְחִילָהּ פִּסְגּוֹ אַרְמְנוֹתֶיהָ לְמַעַן תִּסְפְּרוּ לְדוֹר אַחֲרוֹן :
15. כִּי זֶה אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵינוּ עוֹלָם וְעַד הוּא יִנְהַגְנוּ עַל מוֹת :

PSALM XLVIII. Com. Eng. Version.

[Title.]

1. Great is the Lord, and highly to be praised : in the city of our God, even upon his holy hill.
2. The hill of Sion is a fair place, and the joy of the whole earth : upon the north side lieth the city of the great king ; God is well known in her palaces, as a sure refuge.
3. For lo, the kings of the earth : are gathered, and gone by together.
4. They marvelled to see such things : they were astonished, and suddenly cast down.
5. Fear came there upon them, and sorrow : as upon a woman in her travail.
6. Thou shalt break the ships of the sea : through the east wind.
7. Like as we have heard, so have we seen, in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God : God upholdeth the same for ever.
8. We wait for thy loving kindness, O God : in the midst of thy temple.
9. O God, according to thy name, so is thy praise unto the worlds end : thy right hand is full of righteousness.
10. Let the mount Sion rejoice, and the daughter of Juda be glad : because of thy judgments.
11. Walk about Sion, and go round about her : and tell the towers thereof.
12. Mark well her bulwarks, set up her houses : that ye may tell them that come after.
13. For this God is our God for ever and ever : he shall be our guide unto death.

The POETRY in the Hebrew Bible is distinguished from the PROSE, two ways — by *the figurative and sublime Style* of it — and by its naturally resolving itself into *short Lines*, which (in general) are *nearly equal to one another*, in the same piece of Poetry; which Lines are for the most part *short*, the pieces of Poetry consisting of *long Lines* being but few: and *two* of these Lines or Hemistichs (which commonly are contrived to illustrate one another by words *similar or opposite* in Sense) usually make a Verse. The difference of Style must appear to every one, who only compares the 1st and 2d chapters of *Job* with the 3d and 4th. And as to the Hemistichs, or near equality of the Lines; many of the Heb. MSS, now extant, are actually so divided: but with some exceptions in particular Lines, arising from the want of skill or of care in the Transcribers. And this parallelism and near equality of the Lines, into which most of the Psalms naturally resolve themselves (very differently indeed from the irregular manner, in which some of the Verses are divided at present) will greatly assist us in our enquiries, after the true Reading and after the true Sense.

As to the irregularity of some of the Verses, and impropriety of some of the Hemistichs, as stated in our printed copies of the Hebrew Poetry; perhaps specimens more convincing, and proofs more remarkable, cannot be given than from this 48th Psalm. When the regular length of the Verses, marked in the Hebrew 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 13 (see pag. 66) shall be compared with the irregular length of 2, 3, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15; all men of sense will perhaps agree, that the seven former did not become thus regular by accident; and also, that the Poet, who made these so equal and regular, could not make the rest in the same Ode so dissimilar and irregular. When likewise it is considered, how naturally the Psalm (except its conclusion) resolves itself into equal Hemistichs and Verses; the division, which follows in pages 70 and 71, will probably appear much more just and proper than the present division, expressed in pages 66 and 67.

This 48th Psalm seems evidently to have been composed, on THE DELIVERANCE OF JERUSALEM, from the combined Armies of *Rezin* king of Syria, and *Pekah* king of Israel. And in the plan of this Psalm, which follows in page 70, a correction of the present Text in three places is submitted to the learned Reader.

As

As to the first correction, in ver. 8 (according to the preceding printed division of the Hebrew verses) it has been already observed (Note 19) that בְּרוּחַ *in vento* should probably be כְּרוּחַ *sicut ventus*. The printed reading makes this Hemistic unintelligible; whether the words be rendered in the time present, as *thou breakest the ships of the sea thro' the east wind*; or in the time future, as *thou shalt break the ships &c.* But there arises a very pertinent and beautiful sense; if (after the preceding similitude, taken from a woman in travail) we consider this as a second simile, expressive of the consternation and panic, under which these kings with their armies did flee and were discomfited; full of pain, as Women when in travail; affrighted, like Mariners, when the storm dashes their vessel upon the rocks. 'Tis observable, that רוּחַ שֶׁבֶר *ventus orientalis* is the nom. case to this same verb שָׁבַר *fregit*; in Ezek. 27, 26. If by *Tarshish* here (*sicut ventus orientalis confringit naves Tarshish*) be meant the Island of Cyprus, agreeably to the excellent Note of Bp HARE upon this verse; as that Island lay *West* of Syria, perhaps the Shipping might be in particular danger, on the Coast opposite to Syria, from the *East-Winds*, on account of Storms blowing from that Eastern Continent. And 'tis remarkable, that all the Ports but one, in that Island, are on the Eastern side of it.

In ver. 9 we read — בְּעִיר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת (בְּעִיר אֱלֹהֵינוּ) אֱלֹהֵי־ The Arab. version does not acknowledge בְּעִיר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת; and אֱלֹהֵינוּ is not in 2 of the best Heb. MSS. And, as it seems probable, that the word אֱלֹהֵי (*Deus*) always preceded צְבָאוֹת (*exercituum*) originally, when used as descriptive of God; and as in 1 MS the reading here is אֱלֹהֵינוּ צְבָאוֹת; in the following plan of this Psalm, the words אֱלֹהֵי and צְבָאוֹת are transposed; and בְּעִיר אֱלֹהֵינוּ *in civitate Dei nostri* are omitted, as they seem to have been a marginal note upon, or variation of, בְּעִיר יְהוָה *in civitate Jehovæ*.

The verses 13, 14, 15, have been thought by some Critics to contain an *Address of Irony and Insult on the two hostile Kings*.

The words עַל מוֹת, which now end this Psalm, are omitted in the next page: partly, on account of וְעַל מוֹת just before (for can there be propriety in saying — *ever and ever — unto death?*) and partly, because they seem (as the Learned have frequently observed) to belong to the Title of the Psalm following: עַל מוֹת is *Upon Death*. Or the words may begin the Title of the next Psalm, as having been formerly one word עַל־מוֹת *Alamoth*; and they are now expressed as one word in at least 17 MSS.

שיר מזמור לבני קרח :

1. גדול יהודה ומהלל מאד בעיר אלהינו
הר קדשו יפה נוף משוש כל הארץ :
2. הר ציון ירכתי צפון קרית מלך רב
אלהים בארמנותיה נורע למשגב :
3. כי הנה המלכים נועדו עברו יחרו
המדה ראו כן תמהו נבהלו נחפזו :
4. רעדה אחזתם שם חיל כילודה
כרוח קדים תשבר אניות תרשיש :
5. כאשר שמענו כן ראינו בעיר יהודה
אלהי צבאות יכוננה עד עולם סלה :
6. דמינו אלהים חסדך בקרב היכלך
כשמך אלהים כן תהלתך על קצוי ארץ :
7. צדק מלאה ימינך ישמח הר ציון
תגלנה בנות יהודה למען משפטיך :
8. סבו ציון והקיפודה ספרו מגדליה
שיתו לבכם לחילה פסגו ארמנותיה :
9. למען תספרו לדור אחרון
כי זה אלהים אלהינו
עולם ועד הוא ינהגנו :

Chorus

[Title.]

1. Great is JEHOVAH, and highly to be praised, in the city of our God :
the mount of his holiness is a beautiful situation, the joy of all the land.
2. Mount Sion, on the north side, is the city of the great King :
God, in her palaces, is known for a sure refuge.
3. For lo ! the kings were assembled, they passed by together :
they saw, so they marvelled ; they were troubled, they hasted away.
4. Fear seized them there ; pain, as of a woman in travail :
as the east-wind dasheth in pieces the ships of Tarshish.
5. As we have heard, so have we seen, in the city of JEHOVAH :
the God of hosts will establish it for ever. *Selah.*
6. We waited, O God, for thy mercy, in the midst of thy temple :
according to thy name so is thy praise, unto the ends of the world.
7. Thy right hand is full of righteousness, let mount Sion rejoice :
let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of thy judgments.
8. Walk ye round Sion, and go about her, reckon her towers :
mark ye well her strength, take a view of her palaces.
9. That so ye may inform the rising generation,
that this God is our God :
He will guide us ever and ever.

} Chorus.

1. משכיל לאיתן האזרחי :
2. חסדי יהודה עולם אשירה
לדר ודר אודיע אמונתך בפי :
3. כי אמרתי עולם חסד יבנה
שמים תכן אמונתך בהם :
4. כרתי ברית לבחירי
נשבעתי לדוד עבדי :
5. עד עולם אבין זרעך
ובנית לדר ודר כסאך סלה :
6. ויודו שמים פלאך יהודה
אף אמונתך בקהל קדשים :
7. כי מי בשחק יערך ליהודה
ידמה ליהודה בבני אלים :
8. אל נערץ בסוד קדשים רבה
ונודא על כל סביביו :
9. יהודה אלהי צבאות מי כמוך
חסין ירה ואמונתך סביבותיך :
10. אתה מושל בגאות הים
בשוא גליו אתה תשבחם :
11. אתה דכאת כחלל רהב
בזרוע עזך פזרת איביך :
12. לך שמים אף לך ארץ
תבל ומלאה אתה יסרתם :
13. צפון וימין אתה בראתם
תבור וחרמון בשמך ירננו :

[Title.]

1. My song shall be alway of the loving kindness of the Lord :
with my mouth will I ever be shewing thy truth from one generation to another.
2. For I have said, Mercy shall be set up for ever :
thy truth shalt thou stablish in the heavens.
3. I have made a covenant with my chosen :
I have sworn unto David my servant.
4. Thy seed will I stablish for ever :
and set up thy throne from one generation to another.
5. O Lord, the very heavens shall praise thy wondrous works :
and thy truth in the congregation of the saints.
6. For who is he among the clouds : that shall be compared unto the Lord ?
7. And what is he among the Gods : that shall be like unto the Lord ?
8. God is very greatly to be feared in the council of the saints :
and to be had in reverence of all them that are round about him.
9. O Lord God of hosts, who is like unto thee ?
thy truth, most mighty Lord, is on every side.
10. Thou rulest the raging of the sea :
thou stillest the waves thereof, when they arise.
11. Thou hast subdued Egypt, and destroyed it :
thou hast scattered thine enemies abroad with thy mighty arm.
12. The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine :
thou hast laid the foundation of the round world, and all that therein is.
13. Thou hast made the north and the south :
Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name.

14. לך זרוע עם גבורה
תעז ירך תרום ימינך :
15. צדק ומשפט מכון כסאך
חסד ואמת יקדמו פניך :
16. אשרי העם ידעי תרועה יהוה
באור פניך יהלכון :
17. בשמך יגילון כל היום
ובצדקתך ירומו :
18. כי תפארת עזמו אתה
וברצונך תרים קרננו :
19. כי ליהודה מגננו
ולקדוש ישראל מלכנו :
20. אז דברת בחזון לחסידך ותאמר
שויתי עזר על גבור
הרימותי בחור מעם :
21. מצאתי דוד עבדי
בשמן קדשי משחתיו :
22. אשר ידי תכון עמו
אף זרועי תאמצנו :
23. לא ישיא אויב בו
ובן עוללה לא יעננו :
24. וכתותי מפניו צריו
ומשנאיו אגוף :
25. ואמונתי וחסדי עמו
ובשמי תרום קרנו :
26. ושמתי בים ידו
ובנהרות ימינו :

14. Thou hast a mighty arm:
strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand.
15. Righteousness and equity are the habitation of thy seat:
mercy and truth shall go before thy face.
16. Blessed is the people, O Lord, that can rejoice in thee:
they shall walk in the light of thy countenance.
17. Their delight shall be daily in thy name:
and in thy righteousness shall they make their boast.
18. For thou art the glory of their strength:
and in thy loving kindness thou shalt lift up our horns.
19. For the Lord is our defence:
the holy one of Israel is our king.
20. Thou spakest sometime in visions unto thy saints, and saidst:
I have laid help upon one that is mighty,
I have exalted one chosen out of the people.
21. I have found David my servant:
with my holy oil have I anointed him.
22. My hand shall hold him fast:
and my arm shall strengthen him.
23. The enemy shall not be able to do him violence:
the son of wickedness shall not hurt him.
24. I will smite down his foes before his face:
and plague them that hate him.
25. My truth also and my mercy shall be with him:
and in my name shall his horn be exalted.
26. I will set his dominion also in the sea:
and his right hand in the floods.

27. הוא יקראני אבי אתה
אלי וצור ישועתי :
28. אף אני בכור אתנהו
עליון למלכי ארץ :
29. לעולם אשמור לו חסדי
ובריתי נאמנת לו :
30. ושמתי לעד זרעו
וכסאו כימי שמים :
31. אם יעזבו בניו תורתי
ובמשפטי לא ילכו :
32. אם חקתי יחללו
ומצותי לא ישמרו :
33. ופקדתי בשבט פשעם
ובנגעים עונם :
34. וחסדי לא אפיר מעמו
ולא אשקר באמונתי :
35. לא אחלל בריתי
ומוצא שפתי לא אשנה :
36. אחת נשבעתי בקדשי
אם לדוד אכזב :
37. זרעו לעולם יהיה
וכסאו כשמש נגדי :
38. כירח יכון עולם
ועד בשחק נאמן סלה :
39. ואתה זנחת ותמאם
התעברת עם משיחך :

27. He shall call me, Thou art my father :
my God and my strong salvation.
28. And I will make him my first born :
higher than the kings of the earth.
29. My mercy will I keep for him for evermore :
and my covenant shall stand fast with him.
30. His seed also will I make to endure for ever :
and his throne as the days of heaven :
31. But if his children forsake my law :
and walk not in my judgments ;
32. If they break my statutes,
and keep not my commandments :
I will visit their offences with the rod,
and their sin with scourges.
33. Nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him :
nor suffer my truth to fail.
34. My covenant will I not break,
nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips :
I have sworn once by my holiness,
that I will not fail David.
35. His seed shall endure for ever :
and his seat is like as the sun before me.
36. He shall stand fast for evermore as the moon :
and as the faithful witness in heaven.
37. But thou hast abhorred, and forsaken thine anointed :
and art displeased at him.

40. נארתה ברית עבדך
חללת לארץ נזרו :
41. פרצת כל גדרתיו
שמם מבצרו מחתה :
42. שסחו כל עברי דרך
היה חרפה לשכניו :
43. הרימזת ימין צריו
השמחת כל אויביו :
44. אף תשיב צור חרבו
ולא הקמתו במלחמה :
45. השבת מטהרו
וכסאו לארץ מגרתה :
46. הקצרת ימי עלומיו
העטית עליו בושה סלה :
47. עד מה יהוה תסתיר לנצח
תבער כמו אש חמתך :
48. זכר אני מה חלד
על מה שוא בראת כל בני אדם :
49. מי גבר יחיה ולא יראה מות
ימלט נפשו מיד שאול סלה :
50. איה חסדיך הראשנים אדני
נשבעת לדוד באמונתך :
51. זכר אדני חרפת עבדיך
שאתי בחיקי כל רבים עמים :
52. אשר חרפו אויביך יהוה
אשר חרפו עקבות משיחך :
53. ברוך יהוה לעולם אמן ואמן :

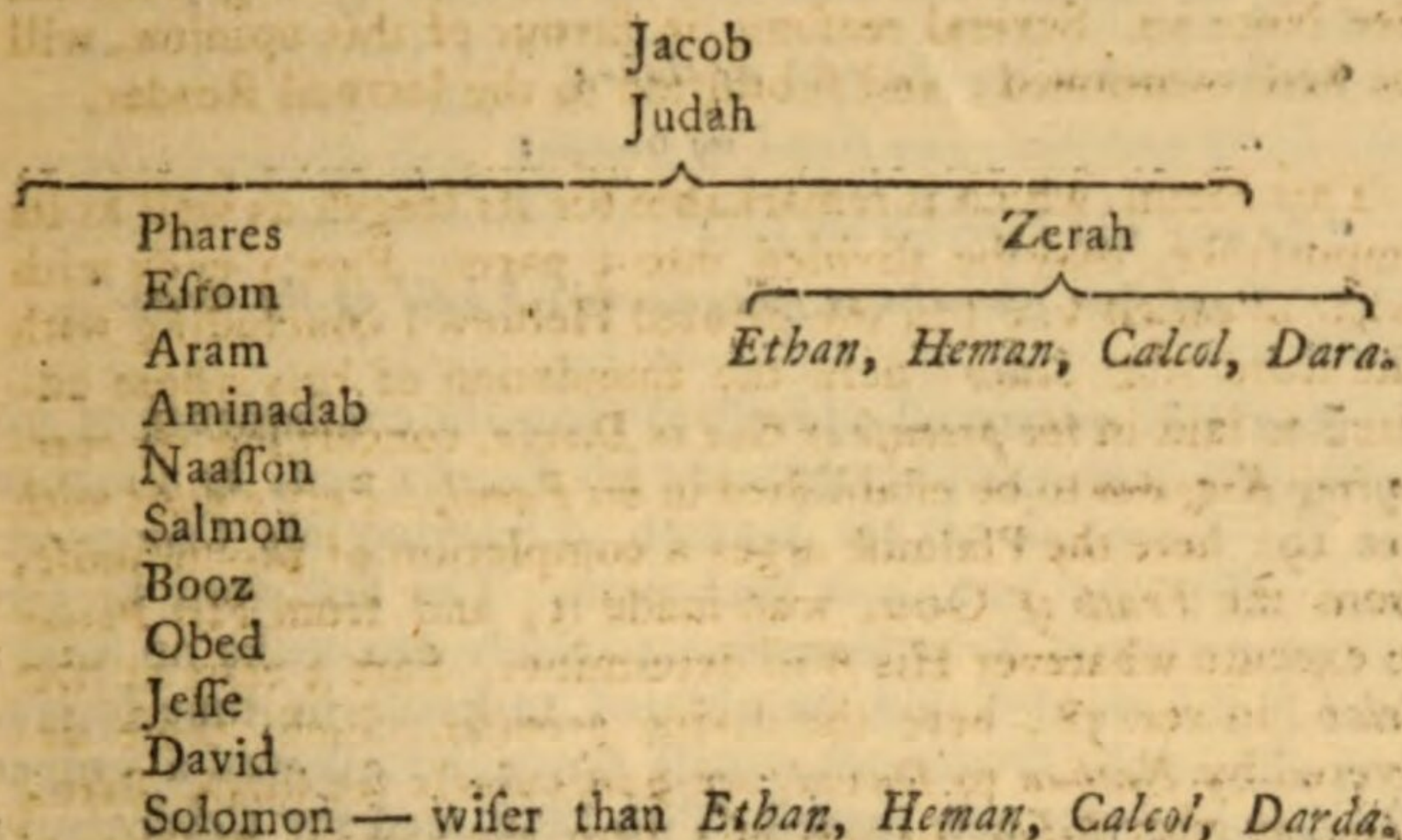
38. Thou hast broken the covenant of thy servant :
and cast his crown to the ground.
39. Thou hast overthrown all his hedges :
and broken down his strong holds.
40. All they that go by spoil him :
and he is become a reproach to his neighbours.
41. Thou hast set up the right hand of his enemies :
and made all his adversaries to rejoice.
42. Thou hast taken away the edge of his sword :
and givest him not victory in the battle.
43. Thou hast put out his glory :
and cast his throne down to the ground.
44. The days of his youth hast thou shortened :
and covered him with dishonour.
45. Lord, how long wilt thou hide thy self, for ever :
and shall thy wrath burn like fire ?
46. O remember, how short my time is :
wherefore hast thou made all men for nought ?
47. What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death :
and shall he deliver his soul from the hand of hell ?
48. Lord, where are thy old loving kindnesses :
which thou swarest unto David in thy truth ?
49. Remember, Lord, the rebuke that thy servants have :
and how I do bear in my bosom the rebukes of many people.
50. Wherewith thine enemies have blasphemed thee,
and slandered the footsteps of thine anointed :
- praised be the Lord for evermore. Amen, and Amen.

THIS sublime Psalm *seems* to have been composed by ISAIAH, as a solemn and public address to God, at the time when *Rezin and Pekah were advancing against Jerusalem*; just before the Prophet was sent to *Abaz*, and delivered the two *Prophecies* contained in the Text of the preceding Sermon. See Note 20. Several reasons, in favour of this opinion, will be here mentioned; and submitted to the learned Reader.

This Psalm, which is remarkable for its length as well as its importance, may be divided into 5 parts. Part 1 ends with what is called v. 5 (in the printed Hebrew) concluding with the word סֶלָה *Selah*: here the foundation of this whole address is laid in the *promise of God to David*, concerning the *everlasting Kingdom* to be established in his *Family*. Part 2 ends with ver. 19: here the Psalmist urges a completion of this promise, from the *Truth of God*, who made it; and from His *Power* to execute whatever His *Will* determines. Part 3 ends at סֶלָה *Selah*, in ver. 38: here the divine *promises*, chiefly those delivered by *Nathan to David*, are particularly set forth. Part 4 ends at סֶלָה *Selah*, in ver. 46: here the various miseries of the *King, People, and Country* of the Jews are displayed. And Part 5 implores the *speedy interposition of God*, to fulfil his promises; and to bless them with the manifestation of that *Son of David*, who was to reign for ever.

The first thing to be remarked, as to Part 1, is the present Title of the Psalm; which ascribes it לְאֶתָנָן הָעֲזָרָתִי to *Ethan the Ezrabite*. But very few will believe this Title to have been originally prefixed here; when it is considered, that *Ethan the Ezrabite* was the grandson of *Judab*, and yet that this Psalm must have been written *after the time of David*. 'Tis said of Solomon (1 Kin. 4, 31, or ch. 5, 11) that *he was wiser than Ethan the Ezrabite, and Heman, and Calcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol*: where the words בְּנֵי מַחֹל are rendered *fili chori* (*Musici sive Poetæ*) by Dr LOWTH, in the Note to pag. 47 of the 2d edit. of his Lectures; whose single judgment will always have great weight with men truly learned: and particularly so here, because we find the Note supported and confirmed by Dr HUNT our celebrated Hebrew Professor. 'Tis justly remarked there by both these Friends of mine (and exceedingly fortunate I am in the Friendship of Two SUCH Men) that in 1 Chron. 2, 6, we read that *Ethan, Heman, Calcol, and Dara* were the sons of *Zerab*, who was (see verses 3 and 4) the son of *Judab*. And that *Dara* is a corruption

ruption from *Darda* is clearly proved, not only by the Gr. (Vat.) Syr. and Arab. versions, but also by Seven Hebrew MSS. That this Psalm therefore could not be made by *ETHAN the Ezrabite*, or *son of Zerab*, is evident; and will be still more so, from the following genealogy.



The next thing remarkable in Part 1 is the difficulty of ascertaining the different speakers. More than one there must be here; because ver. 2 (Heb.) gives the words of the Psalmist, but verses 4 and 5 the words of God. As to *Mercy shall be set up for ever*, in ver. 3; these words were probably given at first as from God: and אָמַרְתִּי *dixi* should be now אָמַרְתָּ *dixisti*, as in all the ancient Versions; see Dr Lowth's Note, pag. 34, ed. 8vo. [So אָמַרְתָּ *dixisti* in 2 Kin. 18, 20 is now אָמַרְתִּי *dixi*, in *Isai.* 36, 5; where our Eng. Version has very oddly *I say, sayest thou!*] But if the first hemistich in ver. 3. contain the words of God; the second, if uncorrupted, is to be considered as in a parenthesis, expressing the wonder and the assent of the Psalmist: just as in Ps. 50, after a speech of God is begun in ver. 5, and continued in ver. 7, 8 &c; the 6th verse (in a parenthesis) contains the words of the Psalmist. The word בָּרָם *in them* was perhaps at first בָּרָם *like them* — i. e. God would establish his truth firm and fixed as the heavens: for, in this Psalm we read, at ver. 30, 37, 38; *his throne as the days of heaven — his seat LIKE the sun — he shall stand fast as the moon.* This is the sense, given by Noldius, in Note 1934; to which Bp Hare refers. The beginning of this Psalm therefore may be translated thus.

The mercies of JEHOVAH ever will I celebrate;

from generation to generation will I proclaim thy truth with my mouth.

For thou hast said, "Mercy shall be built up for ever:

(the heavens! like them shalt thou establish thy truth)

"I have made a covenant with my chosen;

"I have sworn unto David my servant:

"For ever will I establish thy seed;

"and from generation to generation will I build up thy throne."

Part 2 is an earnest address to God, in consequence of his promise; frequently mentioning his *Truth*; and, as a motive to the execution of his promise, displaying his *Omnipotence* over all things in heaven and earth. The first word in this 2d part is וידו *Et celebraverunt*; which can make no sense: and if the word should be obliged to speak in time future, yet even then *Et celebrabunt* will scarce be allowed a proper *beginning* of this new speech. Two MSS read ידו *Celebrabunt*: and the *Vau* is not expressed in either of the antient Versions. The word תרועה (ver. 16) which Bp HARE thinks interpolated, seems evidently genuine, and to close the first hemistich; and יהוה begins the second. This is the division in a valuable Heb. MS, lately purchased for me at *Venice*; and thus both hemistichs perfectly agree. So that they should not be expressed, as by that learned Critic, in the first of the following dispositions, but in the second.

אשרי העם ידעי תרועה יהוה }
באור פניך יהלכון: }¹

אשרי העם ידעי תרועה }
יהוה באור פניך יהלכון: }²

Just as the verse preceding should be certainly disposed, not in the first of the following forms (as by Bp HARE) but in the second: as it is in the MS last mentioned.

צדק ומושפט מכון }
כסאך חסד ואמת }¹
יקדמו פניך: }

צדק ומושפט מכון כסאך }
חסד ואמת יקדמו פניך: }²

In

In the first line of Part 3 (ver. 20) is לַחֲסִידְךָ *sancto tuo*. If the construction here be, *Then didst thou speak to &c.* meaning *then*, when God spake the words in part 1; the *holy* person, chiefly meant here, is *Nathan the prophet*. And if, in this enumeration of God's promises, thro' 19 verses, the whole was not delivered by any one Prophet, but contains the sum of what was declared at different times by more Prophets than one; it is well, that 28 MSS express this word plurally (לַחֲסִידֶיךָ *sanctis tuis*, to *thy holy prophets*) agreeably to all the antient Versions and also to the Chald. Paraphrase.

In ver. 23 the word יִשָּׂא is pronounced by HARE unintelligible in this place, and therefore corrupted. Two MSS read here יִשָּׂא; which, as signifying *elevabitur*, makes good sense — לֹא יִשָּׂא אֹיֵב בּוֹ *non elevabitur inimicus super eum*. And as to בּ signifying *over*: we read in *Jud.* 8, 23; לֹא אֶמְשַׁל לָאֹיְבֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל *I will not rule over you: Esth.* 9, 1; לֹא אֶשְׁלֹט בָהֶם *to have power over them*: so here, *The enemy shall not be exalted over him*. See also בְּמֶלֶךְ with נִשָּׂא in *2 Sam.* 20, 21. I shall only add; that if any one thinks the word אֶפְסֵר (ver. 34) was at first אֶסֶר, because it is יִסֹּר in the words of Nathan (*2 Sam.* 7, 15) and because *recedere faciam* is much better sense than *irritum faciam*, when followed by *ab eo*; he will be pleased with knowing, that it is ס instead of פ in at least Two MSS.

In Part 4, ver. 40; if it be objected, that by the King here cannot be meant *Abaz*, because *he* was not *the servant* of God: it is replied, that he became King by the appointment of the true God, and therefore was so far the servant of Him from whom he received his throne. And in this light, however disposed to idolatry, he might as properly be called *the servant of Jehovah*, as *Jehovah* might be called *his God*: which he expressly is called in *Isai.* 7, 11. In v. 42, שָׁמְרוּ may signify either *diripuit eum* or *diripiens eum*; but cannot signify (what the plural noun here requires) *diriperunt* or *diripiunt eum*; because that is שָׁמְרוּ: which is the reading in at least Five MSS.

If it be objected, from ver. 46, that the King here meant must have been *dead*, cut off in his youth, because God is said to have *shortened the days of his youth*; and therefore the Psalm could not have been composed during *the life of Abaz*: 'tis answered, that *he hath shortened my days* must be the complaint of a *living* man, *Pf.* 102, 24: and therefore, that this phrase means only such great adversity and distress, as might bring a man to the grave: or, more strictly, that grey hairs

and old age might be brought prematurely upon him thro^a excess of trouble. *Abaz*, we are told, died at 36 years of age: so that in *him* we find the personal circumstances of youth and misery, and also the very circumstances of *all his bedges* (the fortresses of his country, built by his grandfather and father) being *overthrown*, and *his strong holds broken down*; levelled and laid waste the preceding year, by *Rezin and Pekah*, who also vanquished his army: for then was it also true of *Abaz*, that God *took away the edge of his sword*, and *gave him not victory in the battle*. See the preceding Notes 13 and 14.

We are now come to Part the 5th and last; in which are many and great difficulties. For the ideas suggested, upon a cursory reading, are — the wrath of God — the complaint of some one or other, about the shortness of his time — mankind were made in vain — all men must die — God did not fulfil his promises made to David — the servants of God suffered rebuke, one servant complaining in particular — that these rebukes were, some how or other, blasphemy against God and slander upon the King — all which miserable circumstances are now closed with a line of praise and thanksgiving. I shall now submit to the Learned my sentiments on these several particulars; after briefly stating the context.

In the foregoing parts of the Psalm, the author of it had enumerated God's promises to the House of David, concerning his favour, and an everlasting Kingdom to be granted to a son or descendant of David; and had represented the distresses of the Jews and of their King as so excessive, that the accomplishment of God's promises was almost despaired of.

PERHAPS the general sense of the remainder of this Psalm may be — *Lord, how long wilt thou hide thy self? for ever?* interpose graciously for the deliverance of thy people, and cease from thine anger, lest they be consumed — *Remember*, consider *the transitory state of the world*; and fulfil soon thy promise of mercy to Mankind; lest thou appear to have *created all the sons of Adam in vain*; meaning — lest it should be thought, the World would come to an end, without God's fulfilling the promise made to *Mankind* (*all the sons of Adam*) soon after the creation, concerning a Redeemer. This Redeemer was to be (as was known for certain in the days of *Isaiab*, see 9, 7) a son of David, and to *reign for ever*; consequently, was *not to die* at all, or to be *raised soon from the dead*: the Psalmist therefore goes on — *Who, where is the*
man,

man, the mighty man; that is to live, and shall not see death? Who, where is he; that is to deliver his life from the power of the grave? Why doth he not appear amongst us, for the salvation of thy people? Lord, where are thy old loving kindnesses, which thou swarest unto David in thy truth? Where the mercies, so repeatedly declared, and so solemnly insisted on, by thy servants the prophets? Remember, Lord, the rebukes suffered by thy servants, particularly for publishing thy promises of A Messiah; which, because unfulfilled, have often brought upon them the insulting question, Where is the promise of his coming, Where is the mercy sworn unto David? Look down graciously upon me, O Lord (spoken by Isaiah of himself) see, how I bear in my bosom the rebukes of many, of the mighty, among the People; on account of Prophecies, which I have delivered in thy name — Vindicate therefore thine own honour, against the insults of these thine enemies, thus blaspheming thee; wherewith they have reviled, wherewith they have reviled, the slow footsteps of thy MESSIAH.

What I have to offer, in favour of this explanation, shall begin with a remark or two on ver. 51. That the servants of God, here rebuked, are the Prophets; is generally allowed. And, if so; then that one person, who complains in particular, in the 2d hemistich of the same verse, is a Prophet likewise, suffering still more extensively and severely. This Prophet then, speaking here in the first person, must have been the composer, or the speaker (or both) of the whole Psalm. If so; what Prophet, after David, so likely as Isaiah, to be the author of a Psalm so eminently sublime? And who so likely as Isaiah, to have been insulted for many prophecies of the Messiah? Again: the Psalms, made on National occasions, were usually composed, and sung in the temple, in the name of the King. And if this Psalm was (contrary to custom) made in the name of, and sung by some great Prophet, in the absence of the King; what King was so likely to have absented himself from the temple, on so public an occasion, as Ahaz? (See pag. 15, and note 22.) It may be added; that Isaiah is the more likely to have composed this Psalm, because of the view it takes (or seems to take) of all Mankind, as interested in the promise of a Redeemer; for thus Messiah was to be, according to Isaiah, a light to the gentiles, and for salvation unto the ends of the earth: ch. 49, 6 &c. See also ch. 6, 3 (Vitring.) and chapters 54, 60, 65 &c.

Lastly, it may be observed; that, tho' the words of this Psalm, which expresses so much concern and surprize (at God's
not

not fulfilling, and seeming to have *forgotten* and indeed to have *broken* his covenant) probably were pardonable; yet, after God had *confirmed* his intended mercy to *the House of David* by *this prophecy of Isaiah* in the Text; AFTER this solemn confirmation of God's promise had been thus given; certainly such very bold language is less likely to have been used, or permitted, by *any Prophet*. It seems therefore, on this account also, to be probable, that this Psalm was made *before* this Prophecy of the Messiah was delivered. And the Psalm is *not* likely to have been made *sooner* than this occasion; because the circumstances of the Jews were not before so very distressful, as to agree with the particulars, which are herein contained.

There is a considerable difficulty in ver. 48; of which verse it seems proper to give the letters, undivided into words, thus:

זכר אני מה חלד על מה שוא בראת כל בני אדם :

These 30 letters are now formed into 11 words, 4 making the first hemistich and 7 the second; a division, which is very unlikely to be true: especially when we see, that one part is unintelligible, and the other highly improper. The verse now stands thus:

זכר אני מה חלד

על מה שוא בראת כל בני אדם :

The first line signifies (if it can be said to signify any thing) *Memento ego quid, or quam, ævum, or terra, or instabilis et transiens*. And the second line is a direct impeachment of God's goodness in the creation of mankind; for to demand, *why he had created in vain*, is to assert that *he had created in vain*. The interlineary version renders the first line *Memento ego quanti ævi*. But perhaps there is no Hebrew expression to countenance זכר אני *Memento ego*: and if אני was to have been construed after חלד, in the sense HARE gives it, it would have been זכר אני חלד מה quam caducus ego; as it is put in Ps. 35, 5, חלד אני חלד. But then, this last phrase is now very different from the former, because the 2d word here is different, and the 3d is very differently placed. But, there is still a much greater objection; for if this line were to continue as it is, the next would then be left to speak the same strange language it does at present. It has been excellently conjectured by the learned Houbigant, that זכר אני *memento ego*, in this 48th Verse, was formerly זכר אני *memento, Domine*; agreeably to the beginning of ver. 51. Perhaps the only farther change need be, not the change of any one letter, but only a different connection of the letters here at present. Of this let the Learned judge, from the two following representations.

זכר אני מה חלד
על מה שוא בראת כל בני אדם :

*Memento ego quanti ævi :
propter quid frustra creâsti omnes filios Adami ?*

זכר אדני מה חלד עלם
השוא בראת כל בני אדם :

*Memento, Domine, quantum sit ævum mundi :
anne frustra creâsti omnes filios Adami ?*

Remember, O Lord, what is the age of the world, how transitory the world is ; hast thou in vain created all the sons of Adam ? That עלם signifies *mundus*, appears from Ps. 73, 12 העלם שלי *who prosper in the world* — Eccles. 3, 11 נתן *he hath set the world* — and thus Grotius, on Rom. 1, 20 ; מבריאת העולם *ex creatione mundi*. It may be possibly objected ; that, according to this version and sense of the words, the Psalmist prays for the speedy appearance of the Messiah ; but can it be supposed, that *Isaiab* would make such a Request as this ? Why not ? The time for the Messiah's appearance had not then been fixed : and why might not *Isaiab* be desirous of seeing so glorious a manifestation ? We have been since told by the Messiah himself (*Matt.* 13, 17) that *many Prophets* did *desire to see* his appearance ; and who was more likely to have been one of these *many Prophets* than *the Prophet* justly called *Evangelical* ? We have been told likewise (*1 Pet.* 1 ; 10, 11) that — *Of this salvation the Prophets enquired, and searched diligently — searching what, and what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.* But here, it may be objected farther : could *Isaiab* speak of the Messiah, as *not to see death* (see ver. 49 of this Psalm) when he himself hath described His Death so circumstantially ? I answer, he might ; because the revelation made to the Prophet of *the Messiah's Death and Return to Life* (in ch. 53) might be subsequent to this beginning of the reign of Ahaz : and therefore, at the time of composing this Psalm, he might not know, whether the Messiah was to reign for ever ; as not dying at all, or as soon to return to life, and live for ever.

As to כל רבים עמים, in ver. 51 ; there is a phrase somewhat similar in Ezek. 31, 6 כל גוים רבים : but then, as Hare observes, the place of the substantive is different. One

MS reads here עמים רבים : and כל was probably at first קל or קול ; agreeably to Hare's conjecture, who well explains the word, as signifying here *vocem exprobrantem, convitiantem, et injuriis afficientem* &c. In ver. 52, the word עקבות signifies (see Castell's Lex.) *vestigia, moræ, tarditates; dicentes, Messiam nunquam venturum*. This sense is exactly expressed in the Chald. paraphrase, which signifies — *exprobraverunt hostes tui, exprobraverunt tarditatem vestigiorum pedum Christi tui*.

This Psalm is now ended by a single line; which, tho' it does not make a verse, is called verse 53: the origin of which seems to be this. There are in the Old Testament some books, which the later Jews have considered as ending *unhappily*; and they have therefore added, after such conclusion, a few words *good and consolatory*: as, at the end of *Isaiab, Malachi* &c. The same has perhaps been done, at the end of some of the books of the Psalms: for the Jews have divided the Psalms into 5 parts or books; the 1st ending with *Pf. 41*; the 2d with *Pf. 72*; the 3d with *Pf. 89*; and the 4th with *Pf. 106*. As three of these four books may have been thought to end *unhappily*; 'tis worth considering, whether each of them has not received an addition, which did not at first belong to it. And, if so; this will account for the *different* manner, in which the last verse (as it is now printed) in this 89th Psalm, is expressed in several Hebrew MSS; being written *at a distance, and after a space* differently from any of the preceding verses in this Psalm. At the end of *Malachi*, the margin of *Van der Hooght's Bible* says — *Repetunt hic curiosi quidam Judæi versum penultimum consolatorium, post ultimum Anathema comminantem* &c. And at the end of *Pf. 41*, HARE has this note — *Hanc periodum, quæ primum Psalmorum librum claudit, cum doctissimis interpretibus censeo non profectum esse ab auctoris hujus Psalmi manu — tres sequentes libri consimili δόξολογία finiuntur*. In short; that this last line has been added to this 89th Psalm in the Hebrew, seems almost as clear, as that there is an addition in the Chald. Paraphrase which has a *double Benediction*; or, that the Arab. Version has closed the whole by the addition of *Alleluia*.

HAVING

HAVING thus offered some remarks on PSALMS 48 and 89; I shall now (agreeably to the end of Note 8, and the beginning of this Supplement pag. 63) take some further notice of *The Lord Bishop of Gloucester's* late reflections on *me* and *the Collation of the Hebrew MSS.* For, however prudent it may be to let pass unnoticed animadversions, which are either anonymous, or coming from writers too inconsiderable to engage public attention; yet when reflections are cast upon me by an Author so high in Station, and of such distinguished Note in the Literary World, as *Bishop Warburton*; silence may then be wrong, on different accounts. It may lead some to suspect a consciousness of guilt in myself; others may infer a conviction of the inutility of the Work I am engaged in; and possibly it may be construed disrespect even to his Lordship, not to pay some attention to his Wit, and (if there be any) to his Argument. But if the reflections of this renowned Writer, with regard to my Work, are a mere fortuitous concourse of words, of heterogeneous and incompatible meanings; which are therefore incapable of forming any regular system of opposition, and have the benevolent faculty of destroying one another: a few proofs even of these matters may furnish some entertainment, and be of real service.

When serious men consider the Work, in which I have the honour to be employed — collating, with infinite labour, a great multitude of MSS, of which this use has never yet been made, tho' they contain many thousands of Variations, some of which are of great consequence to *the Credibility of REVELATION*; little would they expect to find a reflection cast on Such a Work by any Gentleman of Learning, and least of all by a BISHOP of the Church of England. When it is also considered, with what Zeal most of his Lordship's BRETHREN concur in patronizing this Work; men will be apt to infer, that the cause of this singular attack must either be — a resolution in his Lordship to be *singular* — or some offence taken rather at the *author* of the Work, than at the *Work* itself. And if there should be no real foundation for the former part of this alternative; there is certainly too much for the latter.

But indeed, *it is a sad thing*, (and I have his Lordship's own authority for saying it — Ded. to the Jews, p. 9) *when Polemics or blacker passions have gotten so entire possession of a man's heart, that he cares not what harm he does to A COMMON CAUSE, or even to common sense, so he can but answer THE MAN or the*

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opinion

opinion he happens to dislike. The foundation of dislike to *the man*, in this case, is somewhat curious in itself, and may be worthy the Reader's notice. *It fortune'd* (to adopt his Ldship's phrase) that a little before the Collation of the Hebrew MSS was undertaken, I published a Second Dissertation on the Heb. Text; in which I *chanced* to suppose, that there was now a corruption in a certain verse (in the *Proverbs*) on which his Ldship had a written (not a printed) Sermon. And tho' it be marvellous, that any great Writer should expect the world to be apprized of, and to reverence, every paper in his private cabinet; yet it is no marvel at all, that his Ldship should be very angry with a Criticism, which, if good for any thing, would render his Ldship's Sermon good for nothing.

The very head and front of my offending

Hath this extent; no more.

What now was to be done, in his Ldship's case? It was soon determined, for fear of the worst, to preach this Sermon before an Honourable Audience, with an occasional insertion of words of contempt and displeasure against the innocent author of the guilty Criticism. And it was not long before there was found out, in favour of this Sermon, a lucky opportunity for making it public: not indeed in the form of a Sermon, and as a professed Answer to the criticism in the Dissertation. This had been doing too much honour to the Dissertator; and had been an act of too great condescension in his Ldship. He seems therefore to have thought, that his own dignity might be preserved fully, and yet a due chastisement might be conveyed properly, by publishing the substance of this Sermon (not forgetting some wholesome severities on the Dissertator and his Heb. Collation) in a *Preface* to the *Doctrine of Grace*. And there it now stands, with many a contemptuous and ireful phrase, about *a dull conceit — modern sentences made ancient readings — ancient readings made the true — a careful collation of blunders — Antiquity's native garb — received Text — no reverence for the Text — and his own incumbered ideas*: which, with other parts of that Preface, are now for the first time rendered intelligible to the Public, by this discovery of their *esoteric* signification.

Having this *Master-Key* to the Preface, the Reader will easily account, not only for the several angry things he finds there intermixed with the sense; but also for those other things there, which sense can lay no claim to. For it fortune's, that *Resentment* and *Reason* do not always go together. As for instance.

His

His Ldship talks (p. 5) of exchanging dark sentences of old for clearer, of a modern date: which (sentences) Time can make ancient readings, and which a careful collation of its blunders may hereafter make the true. May we not apply to this sentence those words in the same page; that a dark conceit and a dull one have a great proximity in modern wit? But, be that as it will; we may safely express a little surprize, that a careful collation of its blunders (i. e. certainly, the blunders of Time — i. e. probably, the blunders made by Time — i. e. possibly, the blunders made in MSS by those who have from Time to Time transcribed them) that such a collation should be at all insulted by one, who cannot vindicate some parts even of his *Divine Legation*, but upon this very supposition of its blunders, i. e. of the blunders of Time, in our copies of the Old Testament! No wonder, after this specimen, that his Ldship should talk (p. 5) of an ABSURDITY of SOME of Solomon's transcribers. Learned men have often heard of errors of transcribers occasioned by chance or mistake, and alterations introduced by design; but absurdity is a kind of thing seldom heard of in the way of transcribing. And surely, as the point here relates to a single word; if any one transcriber should have absurdly altered this word by design, and other transcribers carefully copied the word, just as they found it: that these honest men should be likewise brought in Guilty of Absurdity, is indeed a matter too serious to be merry with.

'Tis well known, that his Ldship treats his Answerers with plenary contempt, not merely because Answerers of him, but for divers other good causes and considerations: and, amongst other matters, for their inability to take one entire view of A Whole: of this his Answerers have no conception. Their talents are only fitted to consider parts — (Div. Legat. 5, 55.) What pity it would now be, if this very Writer should have proved, that his own talents are fitted to consider parts only; and that thro' indistinctness of vision, or incapacity of surveying at once the Whole even of his own works, he should have destroyed that harmony, which might be expected to reign thro' them! And yet, to mortify the pride of human ostentation, so in fact it happens. In the sentence a little before quoted, he talks of the blunders of Time, necessarily meaning (if any thing) blunders made in Time. And yet, he speaks of one of his Answerers thus — *I could as little apprehend as he does, how that which imports Time, imports also the thing done in Time. Let him take this nonsense therefore to himself!* Div. Leg. 5. 202.

Of this *Preface* to the Doctrine of Grace I shall now take my leave; after mentioning one difficulty, which has puzzled many a Reader. And the point of wonder is this — How *his Ldship*, of all writers, could think of publishing such an invective against *Sophistry*, *Buffoonry*, and *Scurrility*. Now, in the way of trade, it is sometimes found, that a cunning man is loud in crying down this or that sort of traffic, that no one may deal in it but himself. But, tho' our Author talks, in other places, about *interlopers* and *engrossing the market*; yet whether a full solution of this difficulty may be grounded on the supposed desire of a *Monopoly*, is submitted to the Learned Reader.

The Divine Legation, as lately reprinted (vol. 4, p. 46) takes farther notice of *me* and *my Work*; and in such a manner, as demands my acknowledgments the first convenient opportunity. These therefore I propose to make here; after premising the following circumstances. In the former editions of the *Div. Leg.* (book 4, sec. 6) was a long Note concerning 1 Sam. chap. 17. In my Second Dissertation on the Hebrew Text, page 418 &c; I offered several reasons, with the authorities of the Vat. and Alex. MSS, for supposing that those verses were *interpolated*, which occasioned the difficulties in that chapter. In that Dissertation, these difficulties were particularly specified; and they are so many and so great, that neither *Anticipation*, nor any other contrivance of his Ldship's, is ever likely to *master* them: a greater part of these difficulties his Ldship has not ventured even to touch upon.

In the *last* edition of the *Div. Leg.* is the long Note before-mentioned, making above 4 pages; and in vol. 4, p. 46, line 13, begin the words following — *This is the difficulty, and a great one it is. But it would soon become none, in the usual way Critics have of removing difficulties, which is by supposing, that WHATEVER occasions them, is an INTERPOLATION; and some BLIND MANUSCRIPT is always at hand to support the blinder Criticism. But had more time been employed in the study of the nature of Scripture History, and somewhat less in COLLATIONS of MANUSCRIPTS, those would have found a nearer way to the wood, who now, cannot see wood for trees. In a word &c. which same word, by the by, makes above 160 lines!*

From this quotation, as well as from the former about *the Collation of its Blunders*, it is hoped the gentle Reader will learn one salutary lesson; and, by so affecting an example, be warned of the great danger of being *Witty*: since it is so very
difficult

difficult for a man, even of real genius, to be both *Witty* and *Wise* at the same time. There is, no doubt, a deal of brilliancy in this paragraph, concerning *blind MSS* and *Wood and Trees*; and peradventure it would have been too exquisite, if but a little Sense had given it a finishing. But, alas! what an insult is offered to the Reader, by this pseudo-critical aphorism, that *WHATEVER occasions Difficulties is an INTERPOLATION!* Was there never then a Difficulty, occasioned by *omission*, or *transposition*, or *change*? Why, it should seem, *Not*: for otherwise 'tis plain, we must flatly gainsay *the Oracle*. So that the World sees a discovery made, for the honour of 1765; which seventeen Centuries before never dreamt of — namely: that whensoever the learned inspectors of books, written or imprinted, have puzzled themselves or others with sentences bereaved of sense thro' the *leaving out*, or *transposing*, or *exchanging* words or letters; all and every such puzzle is owing to *Interpolation!* An illustrious exemplification of this new doctrine occurs in pag. 6 of vol. 5 of the last edit. of the Div. Leg. — where we find a charge of the Mohammedans against the Jews, sensibly expressed in a Note, in *French*; which his Ldship has had skill enough (in that language or his own) grievously to abuse in *English*. His original tells him, that the Jews are charged with *leaving* the doctrine of a Future State out of their Bible, which has thus been *altered* and *corrupted* by them, *alteré et corrompu*; and this, as my Lord tells us, means — that *the Jews have INTERPOLATED their Bible, and TAKEN AWAY all mention of it!* And it will encrease the pleasantry, unavoidable upon reading such language, to observe — that this Note begins with the word *Taourat*, and ends with *TAOUART*; one word corrupted from the other, by what Critics of a dull conceit would name *Transposition*, but what this terse Writer, this nice Distinguisher (whose talent is the *Ne plus ultra* of what he calls *critical acumen*) is pleased to denominate *Interpolation!*

Let us now contemplate the profound erudition couched in the words following — *and some BLIND MS is always at hand to support the blinder criticism.* A criticism, it should seem, is *blind*; when it pretends to spy out a fault, tho' defective itself in the faculty of sight and penetration; and the more glaring this defect, the *blinder* the criticism. But what, in the name of astonishment, is a *blind MS*? Are *all MSS* blind? Or is this a compliment due only to *Hebrew MSS*, and confined to the copies of *Moses and the Prophets*? Does my Ld mean to satirize modern *MSS*; or such, as the tooth of Time has been

been nibbling at for many ages? Does he sneer MSS, which, though legible to some, are dark and illegible to others; or MSS so antient, that many of the letters are grown pale and faint, whilst old Age has put out the eyes of the rest? But the Author of this wit ought to know, that MSS, *thus blind*, are generally the most valuable; because they are the most antient, and therefore the least corrupted. So that his Ldship, when he *considers*, may possibly be out of humour with his own pleasantry; especially at finding that he has done me real Honour, by representing me as having *always at hand*, looking into, and *collating*, these *blind* MSS.

But, it seems, I am still wrong: I ought to have bestowed *more time in studying Scripture History*, and *less in Collations of MSS*. But, if less time were employed in these Collations, the publication of them would be more distant; and possibly his Ldship might not then live to be blessed with the benefit of my Work. And tho' I am readily allowed some time for other matters by his Ldship, who is only (as he himself has expressed it) *a Subscriber to my PROJECT, as a member of the DEAN and Chapter of Durham*; yet Those Great Men, who subscribe *personally*, may possibly be less indulgent. It happens also, that here is a sad mistake in the Chronology. When I published my Dissertation, which mentions that *Interpolation* here complained of; the Collation of the MSS was not then undertaken: and therefore it is somewhat pleasant to find his Ldship laughing at me for having bestowed *too much time in doing* what I had never done at all!

Utinam male qui mihi volunt SIC RIDEANT.

If it should be lamented now, that I *collate MSS too much*, and *study Scripture History too little*; I would say — that, in order to understand exactly any antient History, you must have an exact Text, or an exact Translation from an exact Text, of the Historian: and you never can have either, till *the best MSS* of that Historian have been collated; which, as to the Hebrew Historians in the *Old Testament*, has not till now been ever undertaken.

But, *good my Lord!* what can be the reason of this outcry against MSS? — What, *gentle Reader* (for I am full of surprise) what can possibly have drawn down this wrath upon MSS; and from a Writer, who has so very frequently spoke of corruptions in the modern editions of antient Authors, and who has often offered corrections of them, not un-magisterially, himself!

self! In vol. 1, p. 110: his Ldship quotes according to the emendations of Petit and Valentinus. P. 131: I read here, with Turnebus. [In vol. 1, p. 160, ed. 3, were mentioned (but are now omitted) the Oxford and three other MSS, as having words which are there called an evident INTERPOLATION of some Monk.] P. 186: the common reading, in which all the MSS agree, is *innocentes*. Victorius conjectured, that Tully wrote in *nocturnis*, which appears to be right: a little more humble than in the 3d edit. where we read, which is certainly right. P. 263: *crimine* is altered to *tempore*, as agreeing best with the context; and a transcriber ('tis said) might be easily tempted to change the latter word for the former. P. 303: the Oxford MS for *securitate* read *severitate* — but *securitate* is the true reading. This criticism not in the former editions. Vol. 2, p. 61: thus, I think, the words ought to be read and pointed; the common reading — is absurd and unintelligible: the MS quoted by Manutius reads differently. P. 63: thus I venture to correct the passage; the common editions (of Tully) have it — none of the critics have pretended to make sense of it, but Petit — whose cannot, I think, be the true interpretation. [In the 3d ed. it was added — that the sense I give to it is the true, appears from hence — all here is natural and just.] P. 84: Casaubon corrected the last word (of Strabo) very justly. P. 129: the common reading (of Cicero) is — Dr B. saw this was faulty; but — seems not to have hit upon the true reading — I would venture to read — and then all will be right. P. 214: the common reading is certainly corrupt. Gataker very accurately transposed the words — Mer. Casaubon (in one word) more happily — they have the true reading between them: but could not settle the text with any certainty. P. 250: there are many variations in the reading of this fragment; and I have every where chosen that which appeared to me the right. And, to conclude this long extract (which is made only from the two first volumes) we have, in vol. 2, p. 251, another instance; which must not be omitted, because it affords a fresh illustration of one of this great Writer's novel doctrines: as a Copist fancied this or that man the *AUHOR*, so *THE* read the text — where all men would have agreed, that the letter lost in *Aubor* was to be found in *the*, being removed by transposition; had not his Ldship taught us, that *aubor* was corrupted from author by *Interpolation*!

What now is to be said to, what is to be thought of, so pre-eminent a Writer; who, after such a multitude of appeals to MSS, comes at last and tells the Public — that it is madness to consult MSS; and that MSS will either find men blind,
or

or make them so! Here however Candour may interpose, and say: that, tho' his Ldship has expressed himself thus favourably to the MSS of *Heathen* Authors; yet, as to *Sacred* Authors, possibly he may think our printed copies of *Them* absolutely perfect; and therefore, that such MSS of *Them* as have many variations, especially the oldest as having most, can only prove *blind leaders of the blind*. Now Candour, which is amiable even when erroneous, has a right to a serious answer; and it shall have one. 'Tis certain, his Ldship allows, that the printed copies of *other ancient* books may be corrected by MSS. And 'tis as certain, he allows, that we should proceed with *the Bible* in the same manner we do with *Them*, in investigating *the true sense*; which true sense, I should suppose, is only to be learnt from *the true words*.

Near the conclusion of his *Legation*, (vol. 5, 343) he says—*The principle which Grotius went upon in commenting the Bible, was, that it should be interpreted on the same rules of Criticism that men use in the study of all other ancient Writings. Nothing could be more reasonable than his principle*—If it be still possible to suppose it his Ldship's opinion, tho' he here allows, the Bible is to be *interpreted* like other antient writings, yet that the *Text* of the Bible is not to be *settled* in the same or a similar method; consequently *he may be still an advocate for the perfection of that Text as printed*: the contrary shall now be proved, and from indisputable Authority. His Ldship has had a multitude of Literary Adversaries, whom he has disgraced with one common title of *Answerers by profession*. But I shall here bring forth an Adversary, whose great Merit even his Ldship will not scruple to acknowledge: no Answerer *by profession*, I assure him: but one, who answers *ex accidenti*; from an incapacity of *surveying the various parts of one great whole*, even in his own Works: one therefore, who advances here what he confutes there: in short one, who, having a sovereign contempt of common systems, and following the guidance of caprice rather than consistency, *brings things in the course of disputation to their confounding contraries*. Div. Leg. 5, 164. I will pay my Readers the compliment of supposing, they have all discovered, that I can mean here no one but *his Ldship* himself.

Now as this Author seems at times a little shy, on the article of the *Old Testament*; suppose, we spare his concern for a moment, and begin with his sentiments on the *New Testament*. In the *Doctrine of Grace*, p. 33 &c. he affirms (as every one must) that St Paul's words (*All Scripture is given* &c.) relate to the *Old Testament*; and he asserts properly, that by parity of

of reasoning they must include the *New*. In page 44 he considers, whether *the words of Scripture must have been preserved, throughout all ages, perfectly pure and free from the corruptions and mistakes of transcribers* — Now general experience (says he) assures us that this is not the case: frequent transcribing hath occasioned numerous variations in words and phrases throughout all (mark, Reader) *the Scriptures of the New Testament*. And thus, with an acknowledgment as to the *New Testament* only, when his argument necessarily led him to speak of *All the Scriptures*, he slips thro' our fingers, and leaves the *Old Testament* to answer for itself. Nothing, one would have thought, could have prevented him here from being explicit as to the *Hebrew Bible*. Could there be, in *This Writer*, a consciousness of inability to judge in *Hebrew* matters? Or was there a backwardness to grant what must have been for the honour of *collating Hebrew MSS*? Whatever the cause were, the fact is, that he here owns corruptions only in the Text of the *New Testament*; leaving his Readers to infer (if they pleased) that he did *not* allow them in the Text of the *Old*.

How much more ingenuous, I do not say artful, is the behaviour of another modern and great Publisher, Mr ANTHONY PURVER; who tells us roundly, that the *New Testament* is corrupted but not the *Old*; for that every Hebrew word, letter, point, and accent, as printed, is all *jure divino*. And then *he* (honest man) gives a reason, why the *Old Testament* is pure, but not the *New*. *This*, says he, *may be the difference, that the old Law lying in the Letter, required an Exactness there, which the new being spiritual does not require!* See vol. 2, *Translat. Bible*; page next to *Malachi*, under what he calls *ADDITIONAL Remarks on the FOLLOWING Part of the Translation!*

'Tis remarkable, that the Bishop and this learned Quaker should so nearly coincide; not only in *this* article, and in their *abuse* upon all whom they please to differ from; but also in opposing the common opinion upon that famous verse, *Let there be light; and there was light*. What his Ldship has advanced against the Sublimity of this verse, is well known. And *Purver*, not allowing our translation here to be either sublime or beautiful, renders it *Let there be light; which there was accordingly!* And yet, I do by no means think, that his Ldship will agree with *Purver*, in what the latter has singled out as a specimen of the true Sublime; on *Gen. 29; 24, 29*: where he exclaims thus — *With what Sublimity of Diction are these two Verses varied!*

Laban also gave her his Maid Zilpah, for her Maid.

Besides Laban gave her his Maid Bilhah, for a Maid to her.

But, leaving Friend *Anthony* to his convictions of the divinity of every blunder in *the printed Hebrew Bible*; I shall now shew, that his Ldship has long since proclaimed himself an advocate for its *Non-integrity*; and has shewn courage enough to correct the Hebrew Text, on the authority of the antient Versions. And most Readers will conclude, if this was ever his Ldship's way of thinking, it is so still. In *vol. 4, p. 227*; after quoting from *Neb. 9, 35, they have not served thee in THEIR kingdom*, he adds, *The sense, I think, requires that the Septuagint reading should be here preferred, which says, εν βασιλεια σου in THY kingdom: and this the Syr. and Arab. Versions follow.* Thus the Reader sees at last, that his Ldship himself is one of those, *who have no reverence for the Text*; for a man can have *no reverence* (it seems) for that Text, which he profanely allows to be *corrupted*.

Should it be still said, there are degrees of reverence; and that his Ldship contends only for the corruption of a single word: which is, at least, less irreverent than talking of corruptions in a multitude of words, nay, and in whole sentences: the reply is — that no man need fear, but his Ldship, when once embarked, will go all proper lengths. And, in the case before us; so far from confining himself to a single word, in the Heb. Bible, he declares *many words* to be there corrupted; he declares *a whole series of Numbers* there corrupted; he declares *the Hebrew Chronology* itself (that very important article of History) there corrupted: and he can *shew how much the Samaritan Chronology is to be preferred to the Hebrew*. See *vol. 3, 32*. Note here; that this quotation is (like the rest) from the last edition of the *Divine Legation*; for the passage, just quoted, was not in the 1st or 2d. And this is natural enough. So comprehensive an act of condemnation was not to be expected all at once. And, as his Ldship wisely took time in forming this opinion; 'tis probable, it may last the longer.

We see now, this distinguished Writer has declared for the existence of many corruptions in the printed Hebrew Text; and consequently must be a warm Friend to the Collation of Hebrew MSS, in hopes of finding authorities for correcting at least *some* of these corruptions. If it be said, that these matters are flatly inconsistent with the repeated outcries of *reverence for the Text* — *no reverence for the Text* — *blind MSS*, &c. which outcries are again inconsistent with sneers at *the Hebrew Verity* — *strange things done with the Hebrew Verity*, &c. the Reader need be under no doubt, but all these matters will be set right, in some future treatise; wherein his Ldship will really be what he

he once pleasantly promised (Div. Leg. 5, 258) — *I will be very learned and critical.* In the mean time, I beg to caution the Reader against the vain imagination, that Uncommon Writers are to be judged by common rules. No : let him rest assured, that this whole affair will, some how or other, be made to terminate in a *paradox*, that like many others (says his Ldship on another occasion) *which I have had the odd fortune to advance, will be seen to be only another name for Truth.* Doct. Grace, p. 68.

In *the Div. Legat.* (5, 418) there is a passage relative to the Heb. Text and Heb. MSS ; which is too curious and pertinent, not to be here attended to. His Ldship says — *Had not Providence been mercifully pleased to secure the contents [of the Heb. Bible] while the Tongue was yet living, by a translation into Greek, the HEBREW VERITY, transmitted to us in the manner it was found in the most ancient MSS, where no vowel-points are used, nor space left to distinguish one word from another, and where a great number of terms occur only once, would at this day be a mere arbitrary CIPHER &c.* Let us try to disembaras this obscure sentence, by dividing it into two parts ; one, relating to *the transmission* of the Hebrew Text, here called with a sneer *the Hebrew Verity* ; the other, relating to the dependence of that Text upon *the Greek Version.*

As to what is here said of the transmission of the Heb. Text ; it must be meant either hypothetically, or absolutely : either as signifying, *if the Heb. Text had been* so and so transmitted ; or, *the Heb. Text has been* so and so transmitted. First then, hypothetically — *The Heb. Text, IF IT HAD BEEN transmitted to us in the manner it was found in the most ancient MSS, where no vowel-points are used &c.* Now by *the most ancient MSS* may in general be meant either the Originals themselves, or the oldest copies now extant. But MSS, long since lost, cannot be here intended ; because his Ldship speaks of MSS, where no vowel-points are used : and 'tis certain that vowel-points ARE, OR ARE NOT used, only in such MSS or Books as are *now extant.* And if, by the most antient MSS, are here meant MSS now extant ; then the sense must be — if the Heb. Text had been transmitted, as it has been, and is now transmitted.

But, if such a no-meaning as this cannot be imputed to his Ldship ; let us now consider the transmission as spoken of absolutely and positively ; thus — *The Heb. Text, WHICH HAS BEEN transmitted to us in the manner it was found in the most ancient MSS, where no vowel-points ARE used, nor space left to distinguish one word from another &c.* But if it be here asserted,

that the Heb. Text has been transmitted to us, without space to separate the words; this is false in fact: and it could be asserted by no one at all acquainted with the Heb. Bible, either as now written or printed. In case therefore, that MSS now extant are here spoken of; this one paragraph is a decisive proof of an entire want of knowledge in these matters. So that we must consider this Author as being (what he himself calls) *disoriented*, at least as to all Hebrew pretensions; and we are necessarily reminded of those words of his Ldship — *I all along suspected he was talking against what he did not understand*: D. L. 5, 319. Thus then the matter must stand, as to the first general point; unless we were at liberty to suppose an egregious error in the phraseology: unless, in defiance of the words *are used* (which confine us to MSS now in being) we could possibly consider these MSS as *absolutely* the most antient i. e. the very *Autographa* of Moses and the Prophets.

Let us now attend to the other general point. *Had not Providence secured the contents [of the Hebrew Bible] while the Tongue was yet living [which probably means while the Hebrew was a living language] by a translation into Greek, the HEBREW VERITY, transmitted to us so and so, would at this day be a mere arbitrary CIPHER.*

Now, as the importance of Collating Hebrew MSS depends on the supposed importance of the Hebrew Bible itself; and as that importance will be lightly esteemed by those, who are taught that the Heb. Bible has no certainty but what it derives from the Greek Version; and as the influence of a Teacher will be less, in proportion as he is proved unacquainted with the particulars he undertakes to teach: for these reasons I would beg to put the following questions. If *the Heb. Bible* (in case of no vowel-points, nor space between words) would be now *a mere Cipher*, but for *the Greek Version*; what becomes of all such parts of the Heb. Bible, as have *no* Greek to answer them? What of all such parts, as have meanings *very different* from the Greek? And what of all such, as have meanings *quite contrary* to the Greek; nay, and must have; if Sense and Truth are characters essential to Holy Scripture?

But, can his Ldship imagine, that *the Tongue was living* i. e. that Hebrew was the common language of the Jews, down to the Christian Æra? Or is it possible he can suppose, that the Heb. Bible was translated into Greek soon after the Captivity? Does this Author not know, that, how valuable soever the Greek Version now is; it has been greatly corrupted, in being transmitted down to us? And that, how early soever it was made;
yet

yet the MSS, used for that Version, were in some places corrupted? This, at least, we might suppose him to have learnt from one great Man; from *Him*, concerning whose *Death* his Ldship (when he was *The Reverend Mr Warburton*) thought proper to say, it gave him *cause to curse his divination*: D. L. 1 ed. 2d vol. Pref. p. 13. This genuine Critic, Bp HARE, would have informed him, that *Menda in Cod. Heb. plurima inventa sunt, Versionibus omnibus antiquiora*: See *Præfat. in Psal.* But, tho' this be the opinion of HARE, and other learned Men of the first class; yet our Author seems a perfect stranger to this, and the other interesting matters just before specified: consequently talks quite at random, in asserting, that *without the Greek Version &c. the Heb. Verity would be now a mere Cipher.*

It is a sound maxim in Letters, that every thing is a Cipher to those who know nothing of the matter: and unless we are to consider the assertion of the Heb. Bible's being a Cipher, as tacitly confined to our Author &c. this must be held so very strange a conceit as puts every other conceit quite out of countenance. The Reader will however be still more surprized, when he knows whence this conceit has been derived, and on what authority adopted. There are men, who do not care to be instructed even by their Friends; but a wise man will not refuse to learn, tho' it be from his Enemies; and yet it does no honour to any Christian Writer, if the only thing he ever adopted from his adversaries be a position, not only groundless in itself, but also broached on purpose to serve the cause of Infidelity. Be it known therefore, that, on May 2, 1744, were published, in 4to, *Proposals for printing by Subscription the Book of JOB, in Hebrew*, considered as A CYPHER. In the 5th page of these Proposals is a Letter addressed To *the Reverend Mr W — t — n*. And the real aim of this Decypherer may be learnt from this single circumstance, his calling the Polyglott Bible *an enormous magazine of Oriental Trumpery.*

Perhaps the Reader has now no great doubt, whence this notion, as to *the Heb. Text* being a Cipher, may have been derived. And if *the Greek Version* has been too highly exalted by *the Lord Bp of Gloucester*; to *the Lord Bp of Gloucester* I shall refer for a correction of this mistake. But the Reader will please to observe, that in so doing I refer, not to a Person whose character is confined to *extensive Reading* and *lively Genius*, but to a Person adorned likewise with *great Learning* and *sound Judgment*: for I speak here of Dr MYLES SMITH, formerly *Bishop of Gloucester*; who had the honour to be selected for writing THE PREFACE to our present *English Bible.*

In

In this excellent Preface that Prelate has the following words; not quite inapplicable to his Successor, and his Hebrew Cipher — *When a sealed book was delivered to the person mentioned by Esay, with this motion Read this I pray thee; he was fain to make this answer, I cannot for it is sealed.* After the words thus quoted, the following account is given of the *Greek Version* — *It was not so sound, but it needed in many places correction — the Seventy were Interpreters, not Prophets; they did many things well, as learned men; but yet as men they stumbled and fell, one while thro' oversight, another while thro' ignorance, yea, sometimes they may be noted to add to the Original, and sometimes to take from it &c.* From this Preface to our Bible I shall extract another sentence, worthy of being engraven in Characters of Gold; a sentence, in which the venerable Author enforces it, as our bounden duty, not only to retract our own errors, but also to expose the errors of other men: his words are these —

IF WE WILL BE SONS OF THE TRUTH,
WE MUST CONSIDER WHAT IT SPEAKETH;
AND TRAMPLE UPON OUR OWN CREDIT,
YEA, AND UPON OTHER MEN'S TOO,
IF EITHER BE ANY WAY AN HINDERANCE TO IT.

And now, to close the present remarks, relative to the Author of the Divine Legation. His Ldship then has been pleased to ridicule, as *blind MSS*, the sacred MSS of the Bible; with many a sneer at the *Collation* of them, which is now making for public service: and this, tho' he himself, with all his pretences of *Reverence* for the Hebrew Text, has pronounced that Text greatly corrupted. So that he will hardly care to say, as to these matters — *What I said, I think, I may stand to.* His Ldship has treated of the Heb. Text, of the Greek Version, and of several other matters, which can be determined only by men of Learning: yet he tells the world — *A little common sense is all I want of those with whom I have to deal.* His Ldship would persuade us, that his Works are particularly calculated to confirm Believers, as well as to silence those who *outrage our holy Faith*; yet, amidst sacred disquisitions, he frequently affronts the serious Reader by very unseasonable levities; and indeed discovers such a fondness for drollery, as to confess — *I can easily forgive the false quotation for the sake of so much Wit:* (Remarks on Occasional Reflections, par. 2, pag. 63 :) and to this, perhaps, he may have been encouraged; because assured by Mr POPE, that

Great Wits sometimes may gloriously offend.

But, if his Ldship would indeed *willingly contrive to live and go down to posterity*; let him do it with the character of a fair and candid Writer: manifesting always a just abhorrence both of *insolence* and of *fraud*; as one, who would really *esteem a total ignorance of letters a much happier lot than such a learned depravity*; and as one, who well knows that *Truth forbids us to RIGGLE into her presence thro' by-paths, and the cloudy medium of falsehood*. If he would have his future Works valued, not merely for *the grace of novelty*, but rather for sound argumentation; let him be more aware of *Begging the question*: and not censure men, as unwilling to *receive Antiquity in its native garb*, only because they desire to know whether the *present* state of an antient Author be the same as it was *originally* i. e. when the very question is, whether the *present* be Antiquity's *native garb*, or not: for the objections made are only to some parts of the *garb*, which *Antiquity* wears now, *two or three thousand years* after its *Nativity*. If his Ldship has thought it right to declare, *I will be fair even with an unfair adversary*; certainly those, who have not been his adversaries, have a right to be treated at least *as fairly*. In short: if his Ldship be indeed *extremely anxious, that no good man should mistake the view with which he writes*; let him study to point out his view with more clearness, and to write with more consistency: not making his Works like *Gonzalo's Commonwealth*; of which (as he well knows) *Antonio* says, *the latter End forgets the Beginning*.

I would hope, that the preceding animadversions, which his Ldship has made necessary, may be of use to both of us; to *him*, by the discovery of his own Fallibility; to *myself*, by shewing the weakness of his attempts to disgrace *The Collation of the Hebrew MSS*. A Work; on which it was little expected such *fastidious Cavils* would have been thrown by his Ldship. Especially, as his Ldship has probably heard of the argument called a *Dilemma*, in favour of my Work, thus happily stated.

EITHER — *this Enquiry into Hebrew MSS will discover Various Readings of consequence:*

OR — *it will not.*

If, the former; the Work will be then *important*, for discovering, that there are *Such Various Readings*.

If, the latter; the Work will be then *important*, for discovering, *that we have already the best Text of the Hebrew Bible which can be procured*: of which, at present, no man is, or possibly can be, certain.

I shall conclude the whole of this present Publication, with recommending to the *free* but *candid* examination of the Learned the preceding *Sermon*, with its *Notes*; the *Notes* on *Psalms* 48, and 89; and also the *Remarks* on *The Lord Bishop of Gloucester*. As to the latter: most sincerely do I wish, that his Ldship may not, at any time, discredit that High and very Reverend Station in which he is placed, either by peremptory determination in matters he is unacquainted with, and where he has little chance to be right; or by condescending to low abuse upon others, who mean well, where they chance to be wrong: that he may not disgrace Controversy on the most important of all Subjects by Wit without Wisdom; nor violate the sacred rights of Truth by Representations at all unfair and disingenuous: but, like *that truly great Man* he speaks of, *the pious Bishop CUMBERLAND*, shew himself *an example of that candour of Mind and integrity of Heart, without which the pursuit of truth is a vainer employment than the pursuit of butterflies*. See vol. 3, pag. 22.

No apology need, I hope, be made to my Readers, certainly none is due to his Ldship, for this Act of Self-Defence. Few men are under greater Obligations, than I am; and few therefore have greater reason, to treat with Gratitude, Respect and Honour ALL THOSE *to whom Honour is due*. I should therefore have thought myself greatly defective in duty to my BENEFACTORS, as well as to the WORK which They have judged it right to patronize; if I had not taken the earliest opportunity to vindicate that Work from these late Aspersions: and this, not so much because it is a Work most honourably patronized, as because there is an absolute Necessity for *Such a Work*, in order to ascertain *The True Text of The Hebrew Bible*. In short: very unworthy should I be of the distinguished Favour of THE PUBLIC; if I did not exert my utmost, thro' Life, for the Service of REVELATION. And I hope not to live a moment longer, than whilst I dare both to speak and to write freely, to the best of my ability, in Vindication of THE WORD OF GOD.

THE END.



Kennicott, Benjamin,

A sermon preached before the University of Oxford at St. Mary's church

Oxford 1765

Hom. 742

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